War Schedule in the Pacific By Colonel T.

JANUARY 20, 1942 FIFTEEN CENTS

NEW MASSES

HEMISPHERE STRATEGY

Why the twenty-one republics meet at Rio. The fifth column plot in Latin America. By Frank T. Baker

WHAT ABOUT OUR CHILDREN?

Common sense in guiding the youngsters through the war. Alvah Bessie reports the opinions of experts.

EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

Putting the skids under Knudsenism and the maybe-but crowd. By Bruce Minton

"THE CENTURY WAS YOUNG"

Christina Stead reviews Louis Aragon's new novel.

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From left to right: Bruce Minton, Ruth McKenney, Alvah Bessie, Barbara Giles, Joseph North, John L. Spivak, John Stuart

A BEGINNING

We are sorry so many of you had to miss it—you who live west of the Hudson. You would have wanted to come and have your say at the Open Editorial Board meeting in Webster Hall last week. Some 1,200 readers, writers, artists of New Masses met to plan how the magazine could be most effective in the victory campaign against the enemy. We tried something no other magazine has ever dared; full collaboration between those who read the pages and those who write them. We made a real beginning that night—but only a beginning. We know we have closer contact with our audience than any other magazine in America. But there is still too much distance between editorial room and reader.

Among those who made these points at the Webster Hall meeting were John L. Spivak, Ralph Ellison, Bill Gropper, Mischa Richter, Ad Reinhardt, Samuel Sillen, Herbert Aptheker, James Dugan, Ben Appel. They brought the problem of artist and writer directly to the audience. We asked for suggestions—for criticism, for proposals, for ideas—and we believe all those present will be thinking along these lines, and will be letting us know by mail or by stopping in at the office. We want to hold many more joint meetings, both in New York and throughout the country. We mean it when we say we want you to help us edit the magazine.

Those 1,200 members of the editorial board were eager, too, when it came to the subscription drive. Spivak (we don't need to describe him and his path-blazing work against the Axis), took the floor to launch the campaign for 5,000 New Subs to Sink the Enemy. That is our biggest campaign and our most necessary one. Spivak asked every one of you to work with him, the editors and contributors — to make the magazine worthy of our frontline soldiers.

Let us hear from you by return mail. Have you fired your shot yet in the 5,000 Subs-to-Sink-the-Enemy battle?

The Editors

(Please turn to the back cover)

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NEW MASSES

VOLUME XLII JANUARY 20 NUMBER 3

CONGRESS OF THE WESTERN WORLD

The Americas meet at Rio to fortify the Hemisphere against any possible Axis surprises. Goal: a common war strategy and extermination of the fifth column. What about Argentina and Peru?

THE conference of the twenty-one American nations at Rio de Janeiro this week is a final summing up of negotiations which have been going on between the United States and other hemisphere countries for several years. In effect, Sumner Welles, the United States delegate, with his battery of diplomatic, financial, commercial, and military advisers, is going to meet with his Latin American counterparts to complete the discussions of a world war strategy against the Axis, already going on in Moscow, Chungking, and Washington.

On the negative side, the delegates must ensure that any threat to the Hemisphere shall come only from the *outside,* that domestic fifth columns shall be exposed by investigations of international scope, economically crippled by blacklists and fund-freezing, and liquidated by arrests and deportations. Even more important are the positive aims of mobilizing the peoples of the Americas in defense of democracy, ensuring cooperation in military matters such as the use of bases against invasion, planning the most efficient methods of exchange of the many strategic raw materials which only Latin America can provide, and guaranteeing the manufactured goods which the Latin American countries need for their own defense and development.

The preliminary agenda, as announced by Mauricio Nabuco, Brazilian diplomat in charge of arrangements, states these aims in a somewhat different way:

(1) Examination of all measures against the activities of aliens which imperil peace and security; exchange of information on undesirable aliens; study of the measures which the countries of America can now take, and their policies on the common objective of the reconstruction of world order.

(2) Measures to fortify the economies of the American republics, including the following: control of exports of basic or strategic materials; agreements to increase production of the said materials; treaties to supply each country with the imports necessary to maintain her domestic economy; maintenance of adequate means of maritime transport; control of the commercial activities of aliens.

THE FIRST POINT on the above agenda, the campaign against the Nazis and their allies, has made great progress during the past few months. The unbelievably methodical organization of the Nazi Party in Latin America, with its *Landesgruppenleiter* responsible to Berlin ensconced as an attache in each German legation, with its pyramidal structure reaching down to the German immigrants and citizens of German descent, organized by a combination of glittering nationalist bait and terrorism, is now well known. In almost every country congressional or judicial investigators have arrested Nazis; stores of weapons and propaganda have been seized; their organizations and leaders listed. Some countries, notably Bolivia, Cuba, and Uruguay, have thoroughly disinfected themselves. Only Ramon Castillo, acting president of Argentina, has refused to take any action against them.

The Nazis, on the other hand, have fallen back on a number of parallel and auxiliary organizations, so that today the fifth column problem in Latin America is not primarily one of "alien" agitators. The Nazis have cooperated with Japanese, Italian, Ukrainian, even Arab fascist groups in various countries, but their most valuable ally, one which our State Department still hesitates to name, is the Spanish Falange.

The Falange is Hitler's most effective liaison organization with domestic reaction. In the countries in which a small class of race-proud, white landowners still holds precarious power over the laboring masses of *mestizos* and Indians, as in Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, part of Central America, and to a lesser degree elsewhere, the Falange is most effective. These oligarchies look back to Spanish absolutism and glorify Francisco Franco.

Ever since the Spanish war Falangist agents, often diplomats and priests sent from Spain, have propagandized for *Hispanidad,* attacked the Good Neighbor policy as an alliance with the "alien" culture of the United States. At the same time the Falangists have tried to revive ancient religious quarrels by attacking groups like the Protestants, Jews, and Masons, who happen to sympathize with the Allies.

The Conservative Parties of Ecuador and Colombia, in both cases the leading opposition party, are little more than fronts for the Falangists. Their official newspapers, *El Siglo* in Bogota and *El Debate* in Quito, are openly anti-Semitic, pro-Nazi propaganda sheets. In other countries this tendency is less clearly defined, though it is evident in the Uruguayan Nationalists, the Argentine National Democrats, and the Chilean Conservatives.

In Cuba the Falange has had its strength among the large and powerful colony of Spanish merchants. But here General Batista's government took stern action after progressive newspapers had exposed the Falangists; several leaders were arrested and some of the Franco diplomats who were their leaders have been expelled from the country.

Alongside the ultra-rightist and ultra-Catholic organizations sponsored by the Falange, the Nazis have backed parties such as Gonzalez Von Marees' *Nacistas* in Chile, the Independent Socialists in Bolivia, and the Alliance of Nationalist Youth in Argentina. The *Sinarquistas* of Mexico are in a class by themselves. They exploit the shortcomings of the Mexican revolution to appeal to the most demoralized workers and peasants to join a sort of mystical anti-political crusade. They claim to defend the *mestizo* and Indian while cooperating with the Nazis and Falangists. Almost the only common denominators of the political monstrosities which the Nazis have fostered are anti-Semitism, hatred of the United States, Red-baiting, and praise of the "new order" in Europe. In line

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with these concepts, any issue which will foster discontent and disunity is exploited with complete cynicism.

The Rio Conference will probably work out some sort of joint program against the Nazis themselves. At this late date, it may even tackle the Falange. But it is unlikely to expose effectively the domestic Nazi "fronts," unless the peoples' organizations of the various American countries carry the fight into the public limelight.

UP TO THE PRESENT, the most effective weapon of the United States against the Axis in Latin America has been the blacklist, or "List of Certain Blocked Nationals." It was proclaimed last July, and it bars US citizens from commercial dealings with several hundred firms and individuals thought to be connected with the Axis powers. German investments in Latin America have been small compared to those of Britain and the United States, but each country has a prosperous group of German, and sometimes Italian or Japanese exporters, merchants, and small manufacturers.

Since the Axis powers were cut off from Latin America by blockade, most of their propaganda funds have been coming from the established German and other pro-Axis business houses. Curiously enough, the money was sometimes furnished by US industrialists, who happened to be using Nazi-controlled firms as their distributing agencies. The local firm would be given an allowance for advertising, and would spend it among papers which also accepted Nazi propaganda. This brought about a contradictory situation in which publishers who supported US policy bitterly complained that they were boycotted by US advertisers.

Until recently American businessmen were quite indifferent to this use of their money, but now many of these Axis-controlled business firms, especially in the countries most dependent on trade with the United States, are going bankrupt. Since Japan attacked the United States, several countries have further embarrassed the Nazi fund-raisers by freezing or regulating all assets of Axis nationals. It is significant that Latin Americans, who a few years ago would have been infuriated at what appears an attempt by the US to ruin competitors for their foreign trade, have on the whole understood and approved the blacklist. For they see it as the economic weapon against a common enemy.

The Rio Conference should be able to eliminate a number of defects in this weapon. For example, the United States and British blacklists do not coincide, and are often inconsistent. A joint list, drawn up in consultation with the countries involved, would be fairer and more effective. Also, the sudden quarantining of established business houses often causes trade dislocations in some countries. In others, notably Ecuador, the local Nazis have been given the opportunity to shout that factories are being forced to close, workers dismissed. A few countries have expropriated such firms, and so kept production going. Certainly, a consistent policy on this problem could be established.

THE BLACKLIST, however, is only a negative weapon. Vice President Henry Wallace recently outlined the basic US policy in wartime trade: to buy up all the raw materials we need, and at the same time, by our purchases to prevent the Axis powers from getting what they need. Much of the Rio Conference discussion will center on this point. The United States has contracted to buy *all* Bolivia's tungsten exports, and all tin except what Britain buys, *all* Chile's copper and iron ore, *all* Peru's copper and vanadium, *all* Argentina's tungsten, plus manganese from Brazil and Cuba, lead from Mexico, minerals of some kind from almost every Latin American country. We are encouraging a new rubber boom in Brazil, and urging increased production of half a dozen strategic crops. For the first time in many years, Cuba can sell her entire sugar crop to us at a good price. Even products such as coffee and cocoa are doing fairly well.

But except for a reduced market in Great Britain, Latin American countries can now trade only with the United States or with each other. Contrary to the pre-war period, the United States is buying almost everything Latin America wants to sell. The result is, however, that it becomes increasingly difficult for the United States to provide all the manufactured goods which Latin American wants to buy.

In part this is being solved by an industrial boom under way in Latin America; various countries find they must manufacture the goods they formerly imported. This expansion of industry is a progressive development, and the US Export-Import Bank is loaning money to encourage it, but there is a shortage of machine tools for the new factories.

Up to the present, the more urgent Latin American demands have been handled through Coordinator Nelson Rockefeller's office. For example, it was discovered recently that a shortage of tin plate hampered the Argentine canning industry, and so the SPAB earmarked 218,600 tons for immediate shipment. But what is needed is a smoothly working system, by which both US and Latin American needs for industrial goods can be supplied with minimum inconvenience. It is to be hoped that the Rio Conference sets up some sort of permanent clearing agency for such supplies, and that the United States commits itself to a liberal priorities policy for such supplies. Likewise, in matters of providing foreign exchange for our South American friends the United States has a big job to do.

MILITARILY, the countries represented at Rio must depend chiefly on US forces. Altogether the Latin American states possess about 400,000 soldiers, and 1,250,000 trained reserves. The armies of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Mexico are fairly well trained, but the best of them are poorly armed by the standards of the war in Europe. Brazil, Argentina, and Chile have navies which could play some part in defending their own coasts. The peoples of Latin America have many times proved they can fight heroically in defending their own soil against invaders; and while foreign invaders might seize the great coastal cities and lines of communication in the interior, they would find the problems of the Japanese in China, and this in more exhausting terrains and climates.

Judging from the newspapers, our military relations with Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean countries have already been worked out. Mexico is guarding Lower California in close collaboration with US forces, and the US system of bases shielding the Panama Canal is nearly complete. But further south the bases problem still requires delicate handling. Uruguay is building an air base, which will be open to US use, and a tacit agreement seems to have been reached with Brazil. Argentina and Chile are undertaking joint defense of the Magellanes straits at the southern tip of the continent. But the scope of cooperation in South America could certainly be broadened.

Of the twenty Latin American republics, nine have declared war on the Axis powers, and are our official allies. These consist of the six Central American countries, and the three Caribbean states, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, and Haiti.

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Three others, Mexico, Colombia, and Venezuela, have broken off relations with the Axis powers, and can be expected to cooperate fully with the United States. Uruguay and Bolivia, though they have not yet broken off diplomatic relations, might also be included in this category.

Brazil, host to the conference, the largest and potentially most powerful of the Latin American countries, seems definitely to have cast in her lot with the democratic powers, though there are still dubious elements in Vargas' position. In a recent speech, President Vargas declared that Brazil has abandoned neutrality and stands firmly behind the United States. This is confirmed by increasing economic and military collaboration, and even by a new spirit in Brazilian domestic affairs.

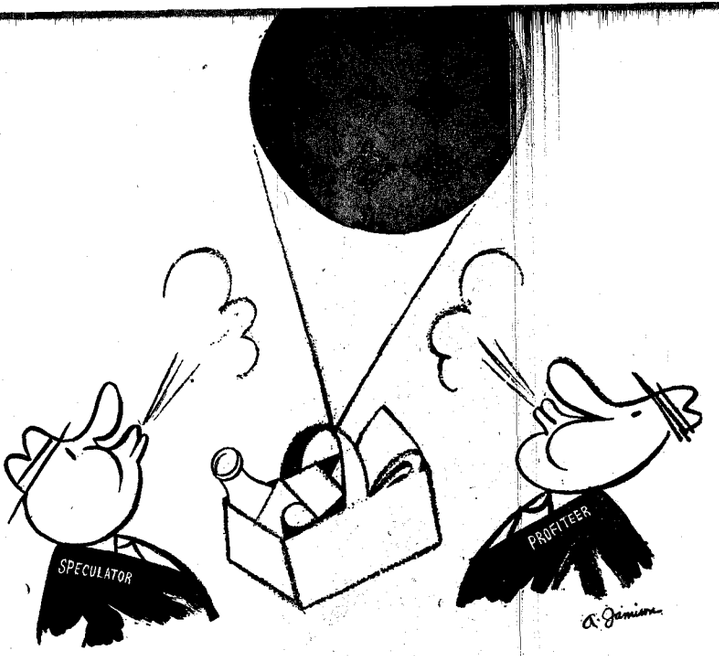
Within the last few months, the pro-allied Brazilian newspapers, formerly curbed by the Pro-Nazi Press and Propaganda Department, has attacked the Axis with increasing vigor. Some Nazi papers have been suppressed, and Vargas' police are dealing drastically with the Nazis of Rio Grande do Sul, the large southern province. Gen. Manuel Rabello of the Supreme Military Tribunal, a comparatively progressive officer, was recently "kicked upstairs" to his present position to remove him from influence on the troops. But it is important to note that he dared to praise the Soviet Union for its "magnificent aid in defense of civilization"—probably the first statement favorable to the Soviet Union made openly in Brazil since the establishment of the *Novo Estado* in 1937. Foreign Minister Aranha and the pro-US group of Brazil's rulers are now more in evidence; the pro-Nazi Generals very quiet. Of course, Latin American progressives welcome this change. They realize that solidarity in the present struggle is more important than Vargas' past misdeeds, but they point out that Brazil cannot be a really effective ally of the democracies while its anti-fascists are in jail or in exile, and known Nazi sympathizers continue to hold high military office.

One significant sign is a revival of the green-shirted *Integralista* fascists, whom Vargas used in his climb to power, and then threw aside. They are now apparently well supplied with Nazi money—a sign that the Nazis have decided their purpose cannot be attained through Vargas himself.

NOW as for the situation in some other countries: the border dispute between Peru and Ecuador still makes them a weak spot in hemisphere defense. Ecuador, much the weaker, is desperately anxious to mediate. Peru wants to force a peace on her own terms. It is still uncertain whether this problem will be discussed at the conference. Some diplomats want to avoid it, to preserve harmony by all means. Franco's Spain and the Falangists have courted Peru with unusual zeal.

Chile is preoccupied by an inopportune presidential election, caused by the untimely death of Aguirre Cerda last month, and probably will not take the leading part which might have been expected.

Argentina is increasingly restive in the clutch of acting President Castillo, who has used the emergency for his own purposes. Japan's attack on the United States happened to coincide with elections in Buenos Aires province, in which Castillo's party seized victory by such open fraud that even conservative Buenos Aires papers such as *La Prensa* and *La Nacion* attacked the government as a national disgrace. Castillo's administration, under fire for bungling vital domestic agricultural and financial problems, and for refusing to take action against the Nazis,



as well as for electoral fraud, has declared a state of siege.

A decree forbade any newspaper to criticize the government's foreign policy, or to make any statement "which could disturb internal political tranquillity." Castillo stated smugly, "We want no one to speak ill of anyone." Public meetings were also banned. The first organization to suffer was *Accion Argentina,* which had planned a series of national mass meetings in honor of President Roosevelt; US Ambassador Norman Armour was to read a message from Roosevelt at the Buenos Aires meeting. One gets an idea of the critical situation in Argentina from the fact that the Socialist Party called off a private National Committee meeting when the police insisted upon attending.

Since ex-President Augustin P. Justo, longtime strong man of the Argentine right, recently sent a message to President Roosevelt urging that Argentina enter the war in solidarity with the United States, it is clear that Castillo's support has dwindled to a minority—even among the conservatives. He will probably not make his position even more shaky by openly opposing the United States at the Rio Conference.

But as far as one can determine from some purposely vague preliminary statements from Castillo and Argentine Foreign Minister Ruiz Guinazu, the Argentine delegation will propose nothing on its own initiative. It will possibly make some attempt to improve its trade position, but will try to steer the conference away from decisive action.

As matters now stand, Argentina, Chile, and Peru are the most doubtful links in the chain of hemisphere defense. In Argentina, however, it is possible that a national coalition extending from conservative groups represented by Justo, to the semi-retired President Roberto Ortiz, through the Radicals to the workers' parties may expel Castillo at any time.

THUS, IF THE Rio Conference reveals important gaps and weaknesses in the hemisphere front, it will also reveal tremendous progress in a brief period. It will be the task both of peoples and governments to close these gaps, move toward a move unified and more efficient economic, political, and military strategy, and develop close relations with the Soviet Union and China.

FRANK T. BAKER.

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EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS

Putting the skids under Knudsenism and the maybe-but-perhaps crowd. The nationwide conversion crusade. Bruce Minton takes inventory of the battle for maximum effort.

Washington.

DURING the first week of the new year there was widespread stock-taking of how things stand in relation to the total war. A month of actual combat has taught severe, and invaluable, lessons. But it took the President's harsh reminder that we are engaged in "a hard war, a long war, a bloody war, a costly war" to shatter the prevailing unconcern even among high-placed government officials. The inclination has been to accept news of American reverses at Guam and Wake Island, and the loss of Manila, with a shrug and the easy assurance that "once we get started, we'll show 'em!"

This initial complacency is wearing off, mostly as a result of the President's repeated warnings that the war is no lark and that lethargy and lack of vigilance endanger the outcome. Not that stupid underestimation of the seriousness of the task before us should give way to despair. But fortunately the wise-cracking cocksureness is being replaced by an understanding of the herculean job ahead and the realization that the sooner we get started, the better chance we have of success. President Roosevelt's speech, opening the second session of the 77th Congress, made no bones about it. Some of the most vociferous of the enthusiastic, cheering legislators were the appeasers; twenty or more representatives and at least six senators must have been secretly consumed by heartburning worry over the danger that many of them may well be named at the trial of Hamilton Fish's secretary, George Hill (or in the subsequent trial of George Sylvester Viereck), for taking Nazi money—a scandal, if it is aired, equal to that of the Stavisky sensation in France, 1933. To this excited joint session of Congress, the President stressed the key question of the war—production. In his budget message the following day, he insisted on "a crushing superiority of equipment in any theater of the world war . . . Nothing short of the maximum will suffice."

IMMEDIATELY AFTER the President presented his demands for 60,000 planes and 45,000 tanks, the OPM promised that these schedules would be met. Industry pledged full cooperation. But to be brutally frank about it, promises and pledges are not good enough. Every person I've talked to in government and in the labor movement has asked, "How do they expect to do it? And when?"

The year-end inventory of the war effort shows that the most obvious lag has been in converting machinery to wartime production. The automobile industry, repository of over half the nation's machine tool equipment, has shifted less than nine percent of its total plant. Hardly a small manufacturer in all America has received a war contract or even a sub-contract (the latest OPM figures show that forty-four companies have been awarded 72.8 percent of all contracts granted up to a few weeks ago). In consequence, by far the greatest part of the productive system is not prepared to utilize its capacity for the war effort. What is more, although automobile factories are shutting down because of curtailment of peacetime production, this by no means implies that these units automatically proceed with conversion. Lamentably, even at this late date, blueprints (the first requisite in obtaining conversion) have not yet been drawn. Despite the pressing emergency, automobile manufacturers still plan to use January and perhaps a good part of February to fabricate 204,848 new cars for civilian use. Yet there is a scarcity of aluminum, steel, tin, copper, lead, almost every vital metal. The shortage of rubber is alarming—but to provide a tire for each wheel of the new cars (819,392 tires, to be exact, not including a spare) will consume over 5,700 tons of this precious material. Business-as-usual retains an iron grip on the nation's economy.

Small wonder the UAW-CIO challenged the automobile barons and the OPM in full page advertisements appearing in Washington and New York newspapers. The industry—and many syndicated columnists—objected violently to the union's charge that "Our war production is poorly allocated. It is on an insignificant scale, in inadequate quantities." The Automobile Manufacturers Association replied with name calling, protesting that labor wanted to take over the plants. The columnists indulged in a spree of Red-baiting, and added for good measure that the UAW was impeding unity.

For all the excited forensics, the fact remains that conversion has been more than slow—it has been almost negligible. And despite the noisy anger of management and its apologists, the UAW can prove its charges to the hilt. Even the automobile manufacturers don't make much of a case for their half-hearted contention that conversion is progressing. They excuse delay by passing the buck: they point out that the procurement divisions of the army and navy do not know their exact requirements and refuse detailed specifications or quantities desired. To an extent, this complaint is justified: the Senate's Truman committee reported that procurement is haphazard, inefficient.

The OPM for its part says it is helpless since it lacks power to award contracts—the prerogative of the procurement divisions. William Knudsen's partiality to a business-as-usual approach, his avid protection of the automobile manufacturers, or for that matter any other large corporation, against demands that might cut into "normal business needs," his refusal to insist on better performance by industry, have caused as many of present-day inadequacies as the vagueness of procurement officers. Perhaps it is too narrow an approach to place the full burden on Mr. Knudsen's hulking shoulders: better to blame "Knudsenism," that outlook of which the director of the OPM has been the most typical representative. And Knudsenism is best defined as an unwillingness to adapt industry to war needs. Not so long ago Knudsen himself pointed out that the automobile industry could never be converted. After the President's address to Congress, and with peacetime production on the way out, he was asked if he had changed his mind. "Of course," he said, "now that there is nothing else to do."

A FEW DAYS AGO several papers carried the story of the two grievance committee representatives of the Dodge local of the United Automobile Workers who came to Washington to tell the OPM about the mass lay-offs in Detroit. They wanted merely to talk to some OPM official. They could not get

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beyond the anterooms. But someone elsewhere in government heard of their plight, and they were whisked in to see Secretary Morgenthau. He listened to their story. He summoned Knudsen, Stettinius, the procurement officers, even K. T. Keller, president of the Chrysler Corp. (of which Dodge is a subsidiary), to a conference. Within a few hours the Dodge grievance men were assured that their plant would receive an $80,000,000 war contract for trucks—enough to keep all workers in their shop usefully busy for a year.

Those few of us who heard the story were sworn to secrecy. Finally the news leaked out and now it is old stuff. But its significance is still of immediate interest. The Secretary, because he had authority, because he went to bat without delay, refusing to take excuses or evasions for an answer, got things done. What he did, Knudsen could also have accomplished had he wanted to. The fact that OPM did nothing is only another severe indictment of the way things are handled in the offices where, since the attack on OPM has gathered momentum, "hostile" questions are admittedly not welcome.

What this adds up to is that unless problems of production are approached in an entirely new manner, our Army and Navy—not to mention our allies—won't get the materiel they must have to smash the enemy. The most logical suggestion has been advanced by the Tolan committee: it calls for "a single civilian board having full responsibility for procurement and the planning of production for military and essential civilian needs," thus replacing the hit-and-mostly-miss methods of present procurement agencies, and the inadequacy of the OPM. Lord Beaverbrook wanted much the same thing when he pressed for a Ministry of Supply while he was in Washington with the Churchill mission. The idea is popular. There is a real boom on for Morgenthau to head such an agency—and if not Morgenthau, then Vice President Wallace.

NOTHING more clearly indicates the gap between program and accomplishment under the present setup than the conference held last week in Washington by the automobile industry. The stage was set for the meeting by the UAW advertisement and management's answering blast. But unmentioned in the press as far as I could discover was the letter addressed to the conference by Rep. John H. Tolan for his committee. "This morning's newspapers," he wrote, "contain the important news that the Under Secretaries of War and Navy are going to offer the automobile industry $5,000,000,000 of war contracts. The newspaper reports mention that this will enable conversion of the industry's facilities, but again there is no indication that a plan for such conversion exists. . . . This committee believes that the new $5,000,000,000 of contracts . . . will not emerge in early and sufficiently large scale deliveries if the policies followed to date are not fundamentally altered. . . . The mere award of contracts, no matter what the sum of money, is not going to provide the country with the needed goods, nor will it speed up the delivery dates."

To accomplish just the sort of planning urged by Tolan, labor's representatives asked that the conference form a joint government-labor-management committee with direct responsibility and authority to order conversion and to see that contracts are fulfilled. Management countered with the proposal that an advisory committee be appointed merely to recommend action to the OPM. Labor was working to supplant OPM and business-as-usual; industry to preserve them. The end result was a joint committee, subject to OPM, to "assist" in obtaining conversion. Plans to translate this wish into action were left till later. Management had won the first round.

But the conference had at least succeeded in securing a place for organized labor on the advisory committee. As a further sop to the disappointed unionists, Walter Reuther of the UAW was designated as one of those to tour industrial plants along with procurement officers to speed conversion. But the UAW's statement at the end of the conference made clear that the union delegates were far from content. The union expressed deep chagrin that OPM and industry had made no plans to assure conversion, that proposals for pooling facilities had been discarded, that labor "will have no effective voice," that the conference in reality had done almost nothing. If reform of OPM methods was a desirable goal, certainly labor —and the American people—had good reason to complain. More, if conversion were imperative, the "insufficient power" of the new sub-committee, the lack of any plans to carry conversion through, constituted a serious setback.

Mr. Knudsen's contribution to the conference—aside from blocking labor's proposals—was to act, in his own words, as an auctioneer. "We want more machine guns," he shouted. "Who wants to make machine guns?" The bidding was inspiring. "How many tanks can you promise me? What about a few shells?" Such was Mr. Knudsen's "planning," a far cry from the Tolan committee's "plan for the full use of all American industry," which is "indispensable to the transformation of our war effort from its present paper status to the arming of military forces capable of taking the offensive."

There is always the danger that those who attack OPM failures, who point the finger of accusation at Mr. Knudsen and his followers, who charge management with not pressing ahead to achieve the all-important conversion of available equipment—that such critics will be charged with disrupting national unity. But to have meaning, national unity must win the full prosecution of the war. Those who hamper the all-out effort stultify unity. Today national unity is a very real thing among the people; it is mocked only by a few officials and by certain large industrialists. What value is the contribution of C. E. Wilson, president of General Motors, who angrily told the press immediately after the conference that pooling facilities would mean "socialization of industry," that for labor to participate in any real way on a joint committee granted responsibility and power would amount to "regimentation," and that despite the record, "ordinary business ways will take care of the emergency too"?

I have talked to many unionists. All of them are worried. All of them call for the most energetic fight against those who delay and obstruct. One of them said, "The unions can't do the job alone. It's everybody's problem. In every community, we must begin to hear from the people demanding action. So far we haven't got conversion, but we have 400,000 unemployed coming up in the automobile industry alone. We haven't got adequate production, but we have huge demands for munitions and machines from the army and the navy. Knudsen throws monkey wrenches around and management tries to explain away failures, but because we haven't tanks and planes, we are losing the Philippines and wasting the lives of our boys. We've got to change things right now—and that means the people have got to stand up and yell like bloody murder."

President Roosevelt told Congress and the nation: "Speed will count. . . . Speed will save lives; speed will save this nation which is in peril; speed will save our freedom and civilization—and slowness has never been an American characteristic."

But a few are murdering speed.

BRUCE MINTON.

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TENNESSEE TREK

"I'm a-goin'," Milton D. Ellis overheard the South say. The big things that are happening since Pearl Harbor. What the average man thinks.

PEARL HARBOR hit Tennessee hard. Almost every town in the state seems to have lost a boy. Harriman (pop. 4,200) lost four; and every newspaper I picked up carried a picture of some Tennessee lad reported missing—in Honolulu, in Wake, in Guam. At the farmers' market in Knoxville, I heard two farm women talking between customers. One of them was middle-aged, stout, dressed in new black. Red-eyed but tearless, she stood there between her wares (holly and ground pine) and the busy Christmas crowd. "No," she told her companion, "they didn't draft him—he enlisted back in June. 'Mom,' he says, 'I'm a-goin.' And it warn't up to me to tell him no."

The US Army Recruiting Service in Knoxville reported that seventeen clerks were required just to handle letters received each day from Tennesseans demanding to be told what they could do "to help lick the Japanese." One farmer, a determined, slow-spoken man who was obviously over age, came in. Twisting his hat in his hand, he explained that his son was in the service in Hawaii, and he had not heard from him since the Japanese attack. "I want to get out there and go to work on 'em," he said.

The bus stations seemed to be full of young men headed for Nashville—receiving point for the navy. The navy has always been popular in those landlocked valleys; and Pearl Harbor hasn't damaged its prestige. I talked to one group. They were going to Nashville for their "physicals"; they hoped they wouldn't be rejected; they had round-trip tickets but they weren't going to use the return stub. "By God, we'll get in *somehow!*" Three of them in the washroom had a bottle of corn. Surprisingly, they struck up a Methodist hymn. They did it beautifully, and an inquiry revealed that they were three-fourths of a religious quartet which sings every day over a small local radio station. It was the marines for them.

THE SOUTH had been "pro-war" long before December 7. The strong economic and historic ties with England, even in some odd fashion memories of the Civil War—all this and more contributed to a militant all-out sentiment. The war has also changed the southern press. Whereas three or four years ago foreign news consisted of a six-line, pro-Franco dispatch on the last page, today foreign datelines dominate the front page. The editorials are extraordinarily unified, the last vestiges of provincialism having disappeared. Recognition of the global character of the war is general. A Roanoke (Va.) paper has a permanent new eight-column slogan: "Remember Pearl Harbor!" The Chattanooga *Times* complimented the Russians on their Christmas present to Hitler—"a present Stalin had long been preparing." Recognition of the Soviet contribution seems widespread, and Moscow and Kuibyshev dispatches were on page one of every paper I saw.

The attitude toward Russia is interesting. Except for the big metropolitan press, and relatively small upper class circles in the cities, there was until recently an attitude of genuine neutrality toward the Soviets. This is now everywhere tempered with growing admiration for the Red Army.

A farmer going to the county seat to pay his taxes was more or less typical of this sentiment. We approached the subject with rustic circuity. He said he wouldn't put it past 'em if them Japanese hadn't been a-planning this here attack for a long time. He thought we ought to go over and clean 'em up —them and the Nazis—once and for all. Heard one of them commentators telling about how the Russians was whipping Hitler. Seemed to him them Russians had done right well—but then, always *had* seemed to him there was more to the Russians than most folks made out. Minding their own business and all. . . .

BY AND LARGE, Tennessee seemed not only more war conscious but also more war prepared than the East. A filling station operator way out in the mountains wanted to know if we had a flashlight. Never could tell, he said, when you'd run into a blackout, and most tourists weren't prepared. I found Nashville citizens old hands at blackouts and experts at identifying planes. The power shortage in the southeast (due to abnormally low water) had necessitated a thirty percent cut in civilian consumption last fall. Many owners of electric signs installed gasoline generators to manufacture their own power, along with miniature neon signs in the lower corner pointing to this fact. There was a rush for candles and lanterns, and now they are better prepared for real blackouts than most Easterners.

Here at Nashville is the huge new Vultee factory, just getting into the mass production of its savage pursuit planes. This is said to be the first completely mechanized assembly line for planes in America. The Nashville skies are alive with planes and it is small wonder that Nashvillians are air-minded. They can tell the make and type of plane overhead with scarcely a squint at it. Hundreds of them are attending new aeronautical schools there, and the demand is so great that one of the schools is now operating on a twenty-four hour basis.

Civilian Defense note in the Knoxville *Journal*—a letter to the editor from a Negro citizen. "Does it not seem strange and out of place that even now, as we battle against aggressor nations who would destroy our form of government, that we Negroes are still denied the privilege of helping defend the things we too hold dear? . . . I refer to the recent statement in the *Journal* that 'all white men between the ages of 18 and 50 should be eligible to join the Volunteer Fire Department.' We, as Negroes and as citizens in this American democracy, have the desire to fill our duties as citizens at home as well as on the battlefront."

BUT FACTORS other than the war are changing the face of the South. Take agriculture, where progress is dramatically evident. Since the Triple-A was plowed under, the administration has devised a more constitutional and far more constructive means of crop limitation—that of soil improvement. Here the farmer is paid so much per year for each acre he puts into "cover crops" and "soil builders"—nitrogen-fixing plants like clover, lespedeza, and alfalfa. These crops not only halt surface erosion, enrich the soil, and, when plowed back, improve both the chemical and mechanical texture of the soil. They also afford excellent pasturage and hay crops. This, in turn, almost forces the spread of dairying—essential to any balanced agricultural economy.

Other factors are at work in the Tennessee Valley's agriculture. Winter grains—oats, barley, rye—are now providing new winter pasturage as well as new summer small-grain crops. This adds balance to the economy and color to the landscape. The administration is subsidizing a fertilization program, using TVA phosphates, nitrates, and limestone. Fall plowing, an important means of holding winter moisture hitherto almost unknown in the South, is now widespread.

The hilly counties, in collaboration with the TVA and the State Department of Agriculture, are buying huge terracing machines. At little cost to the farmers, these machines can be brought into their fields to throw up trenches which follow the contours instead of the fence lines. This reduces sheet erosion (loss of topsoil) and leeching (loss of soluble minerals

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in the soil) to a minimum. It incidentally gives the landscape an architectural character somewhat resembling that of the brilliantly engineered rice fields of the Philippines and China.

One interesting sidelight of the growth of dairying is to be found in Middle Tennessee. This region, with its bluegrass, is the only section of the state with a natural year-round pasturage (bluegrass is an "evergreen"). Here both beef and dairy cattle are increasingly important. Here too the great milk combines have moved in—Borden's, Carnation, etc. Now to sell raw milk to these companies, the dairy farmers must meet certain minima: tuberculin-free cows, modern barns, sanitary milk-handling equipment. This naturally requires money from farmers already mortgaged to banks and insurance companies. So now the milk companies have evolved a canny arrangement whereby they step in and build a barn for the farmers. Payment is in the form of small deductions from the monthly milk check. The investment is guaranteed by a lien on the herd and exclusive access to the farmer's output during the life of the contract.

Finally, there is to be seen along all the highways the heroic reforestation and erosion control work of the CCC. In collaboration with the TVA, the Conservation Corps is restoring to their natural state thousands of hillside acres which should never have been cleared in the first place. Although this area is apparently too far north for the cultivation of slash pine for newsprint that one sees in Alabama and Georgia, the forest culture of the CCC will ultimately make the timber crop an important factor in this region again.

All this has helped the farms—and presumably the farmers, although that does not necessarily follow. At any rate, it has won the farmers solidly to the side of the administration—of that there can be no doubt. There is already much talk of expanding next year's crop production, and speculation as to how increased war production will affect the conservation program. I talked to several farmers who had "retired" to dairying; all of them were planning to change over to at least some food crop production next spring. They know that America must feed the world and they aim to do it.

BUT THE REAL IMPACT of a visit to Tennessee lies in the physical structure of the TVA. This is literally breathtaking. The scale of TVA operations, especially since May 1940, has become so vast that it must be seen to be appreciated. A thirty-five mile stretch of US 11 northeast of Knoxville lies along the wall of a beautiful little valley which will shortly become the reservoir of a dam now in construction. This entire area is literally being remade, with astonishing neatness and efficiency. Old farm houses are being taken down or moved, new houses and barns are being built, the highway is being relocated, old graveyards are being moved to higher sites, trees and brushwood, which would be submerged, are being cleared for timber or firewood. The entire lake floor, hundreds of thousands of acres in extent, will be as clean as your living room floor before it is flooded. And as you drive along, you can see the timber line weaving in and out of the hills, marking the design of future islands, coves, and peninsulas.

This new water is changing the cultural and recreational patterns of the entire region. Sailboats, aquaplanes, bathing beaches appear overnight. Even the sea-gulls have moved in— "Queer varmints," a native told me, "and as bright and sassy as a crow." This was a region of normal rainfall and many streams; at the same time it was a land of frequent drouth, long hot summers, and no lakes at all. The TVA has changed all this. It has put Knoxville in the heart of a man-made "lake country." It has necklaced landlocked Chattanooga with an eighty-mile lake. When completed, the great Tennessee will have literally ceased to be a sullen muddy river and become a continuous chain of ice-blue lakes. It is entirely possible that the TVA program will eventually modify the climate itself.

The towns are changing. Tennessee is a state of many small counties, all laid out in the days of horse-drawn vehicles. Since thirty miles was the maximum trip for that day, these county seats are rarely more than thirty-five miles apart. Now, along the main highways, they seem almost to run together. The movement of northern industry into these towns in the last two decades has converted them from sleepy little Saturday market places to communities with a full quota of modern shops, air-conditioned theaters, neon signs, paved and lighted streets. Sign of change and good augury of the future is the appearance of CIO and AFL headquarters on the court house square. In every town you see them there, between such other institutions as the bus station and the bank.

The amount of new construction, especially of houses and small factories, is remarkable. The spread of public power lines over the countryside has released the house from its dependence upon municipal utilities. Hence, bright new houses are going up for miles outside the town in all directions. Driving along in those wintry pre-Christmas nights, we were hardly ever out of the cheery sight of electrically lighted trees. Topping the wild mountains at Monteagle one night, we saw below us the Nashville highway stretching away as far as the eye could reach—all lighted, so that from that distance it looked almost like a city street. Alongside it flashed the airline beacons. . . .

All this has infused, it seems to me, new life in Tennessee and is winning its people solidly to the cause of progress. Keystone to the whole structure is the TVA. It deserves credit both for what it has done and the way it has done it. Symbolic is the way it found time out from heavy engineering to move the graves of long-dead settlers to higher ground, or to carry live coals from hearthstones which had not been cold since Daniel Boone to new ones elsewhere. This has left an indelible impression on the people down there, and gone far to dispel the confusion and distrust which the power trust once tried to spread.

I DO NOT, however, mean to paint a Utopia. Grave problems still confront the southern people, and national unity in the war will not automatically solve them. The unions are solidly entrenched and growing. But their job isn't done by a long shot, nor has it been easy. The tradition of Bloody Harlan is still alive in certain mines and factories, as witness the notorious Ducktown frameup. Here eight members of the CIO's United Mine, Mill & Smelter Workers, leaders of the 1939 strike at the Tennessee Copper Co.'s Ducktown plant, have been convicted of conspiracy to damage federal property. These men face fifteen-year sentences and heavy fines for having allegedly dynamited TVA power lines supplying the plant, although the only evidence is based on the testimony of convicted perjurers, rapists, and a murderer. Company unionism is no stranger to the Valley.

Especially noticeable, even to the holiday visitor, is the plight of the poor farmer and of the Negro people. During those pre-Christmas days, the towns and cities of East Tennessee were flooded with highland and mountain people. They came down in their old cars to sell their holly and ground pine and mistletoe, and their handicraft—baskets, hooked rugs, and tufted spreads. They came to buy as much "store goods" as their sales allowed. They are the least touched by all this change, and the least benefited. They show this in their faded clothes, their bad teeth, their slender, wiry bodies. (After a while you begin to think that "plump" and "mountaineer" are mutually exclusive terms.) These are the Valley's forgotten people. And to see them blue with cold, forced to stand on a street corner haggling over the price of a wreath of holly, is to make one blind with anger. (Did you ever try to weave a holly wreath with your bare hands, or climb to the top of a hickory tree for a lone sprig of mistletoe?)

The plight of the Negro people is essentially the same,

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Michaels

though in this part of the South the Negroes are preponderantly urban. There are increasing signs of change, however. The foundries in Chattanooga are being unionized—and a majority of their employees are Negroes. In Nashville, for the first time in history, local businessmen joined actively in a fund-raising campaign for a Negro hospital. In a backwoods country church in Middle Tennessee I heard a young Negro parson preach as fine a sermon on the necessity for unity in the face of the Hitlerite attack as you could hear anywhere. It took him only seven minutes and he chose as his text: you got to do the best with what you got and *make more of it.* He pointed out to his congregation that the Negro people had the right to meet and worship—"and that's more than them pore people over yonder got." It had not been a year of unmixed blessings, but you had to remember what the rest of the world was a-going through. That was reason to be thankful, he said. "We're all of us in this thing an' we gotta see it through."

There are increasing signs of Negro militancy down there. I got a distorted reflection of this fact in several well upholstered southern homes—stupid and vicious remarks about "uprisings." The Negro people are in movement; and those unique remnants of the slave plutocracy which still infest upper class southern circles are intuitively aware of it, and guiltily worried about it. The segregation they still impose on the South cannot but appall the visitor. Drinking fountains in TVA rest rooms "for white only." Beautiful new buses with built-in illuminated (sic!) signs: "This part of bus for colored race."

But all this will change. The South was in movement before December 7. And subsequent events cannot but accelerate its struggle for democracy, abroad and at home.

MILTON D. ELLIS.

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EDEN'S JOURNEY TO MOSCOW

Claude Cockburn cables the significance of the British-Soviet discussions. The blow to Nazi propaganda. The postwar settlements. "Injecting a sense of reality. . . ."

London (by cable).

"THE importance of Russia in the Europe of tomorrow will be as great as it is today—and it would be hard to put it higher than that." In a leading article, "Unity Beyond War," the London *Spectator,* among the foremost conservative weeklies, makes this comment on the subject of Eden's talks in Moscow. A platitude, of course, a glimpse of the obvious. But nevertheless symptomatic of the fact that things which ought to have been obvious long ago are at least obvious now. And symptomatic too of a change which I should say has only begun to take place here, not since June 22 but since a much more recent date—after the first serious German setbacks and grave defeats in Russia. I do not think that until then you would have found a great many conservatives who would have acknowledged the necessity, or at any rate the urgency, of general Anglo-Soviet conversations going beyond the bounds of military and supply questions such as were covered in the earlier conversations with Beaverbrook.

It is just about unanimously acknowledged here that the Eden visit and the discussions initiated signified a profoundly important recognition of the realities of a much longer perspective. The importance of the tendencies expressed in the Eden visit can be gauged most easily by comparing them with contrary tendencies which existed—and doubtless still exist—in some quarters here. Obviously there were those who, from the moment of America's entry into the war and even before that, saw an Anglo-American alliance now and cooperation in the future as something on quite a different plane from the other components of the grand alliance. Such notions are a powerful relic of quite a jumble of traditional British policies and aspirations. In some people's minds these notions led to visualizing a postwar situation in which an Anglo-American bloc would try to "deal with" problems—including some important European problems—in isolation from the Soviet Union. Eden's visit, and a good deal of the conservative press comment which followed it, have served to inject a sense of realities, particularly of European realities, into these foolish dreamings.

C. ROWE *in the British "Our Time"*

The initiative of the British government was a blow, a deliberate blow, to those who speculated on an Anglo-American bloc divorced from the Soviet Union and China. It is obvious that with the present economic and social condition of occupied Europe, and indeed of Germany itself, such a conception could be favorable only to the propaganda of the German government itself. In fact it is a card which the German government frequently seeks to play, partly because such an idea would have a splitting effect upon the "oppositional" forces in Europe, partly because it would revive throughout Europe the unpleasant memories of 1919.

The Eden visit has made it clear that there will be no resemblance whatever, at any point, between the Treaty of Versailles and the settlement which will follow this war. It may as well be said that in some respects the treaty or settlement which follows this time will be a great deal harsher than Versailles. Harsher, that is to say, against those responsible in Germany for the aggressions of the last years, for the bestial atrocities of the German troops revealed in Molotov's latest note, and for the prolonged and systematic perversion of German youth and young manhood which has made these things possible. It is time to remember, and we may be sure that Central Europe remembers, that the notorious "harshness" of the Versailles Treaty fell upon the working people of Central Europe. It hardly touched either the ruling royalties of that period, most of whom abdicated safely and wealthily, or the leaders of Central European big business, whose Krupps and Stinnes' flourished like the green bay tree under the treaty's provisions. As for the very politically conscious military leaders of German imperialism at that period, we need only recall, and again Central Europe certainly recalls, that it was Hindenburg who finally opened the gates of power to Hitler. And that men like General Groener and General von Seeckt, because of the freedom permitted them following their defeat in the field, laid the basis for the present state of German militarism and were the instruments through which the disunited but heroic progressive forces were destroyed.

One need only reflect on these facts to see that what was wrong with the Treaty of Versailles was not its "harshness" but that the victorious powers, for reasons with which we are all painfully familiar, preferred to aim their harshness at the wrong targets. It is being realized with increasing clarity here that this must not happen again, and that only understanding between Britain and the Soviet Union is a promise that it will not happen again. It is because Eden's visit to Moscow, following the deeply inspiring agreement between the Soviet and Polish governments, is a real step on the road toward victory first and then a peace which will make sense, that it has been regarded with profound satisfaction here.

It is sometimes suggested that all discussion of postwar problems is at this moment academic and misleading. It is true that nine times out of ten the charge is justified. But I suppose nobody would suggest that the Soviet government is much given to academic dreaming of this kind. And it is realized that discussion of this kind, so far from being "merely" a discussion about "something in the future," is a discussion of future policy which at the same time has the most immediate practical bearing upon the most urgent problems facing us, particularly as regards the practical effects within occupied Europe and within the German Reich itself.

CLAUDE COCKBURN.

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War Schedule in the Pacific

Colonel T. discusses Japan's strategy. The military and naval problems facing the ABCD powers. Encircling the encirclers.

THE statistical figures involved in the struggle in Australasia defy the human imagination. Just think—an area of roughly 75,000,000 square miles between Ceylon and Hawaii, Tasmania and Hokkaido, with strategic lines of communications five and seven thousand miles long. Just stare at a detailed map of this immense area and you will get the impression that you are looking at the immensity of a clear starlit sky.

This area of war has a sort of kernel which is roughly elliptical in shape. This ellipse contains the things Japan has and wants right away. The area of this kernel is approximately one-tenth of the entire area of the Australasian theater of war. Here lies the main objective of Japan—the Netherlands East Indies, with their oil, metals, and food.

The long axis of this ellipse, the line Osaka-Singapore, is Japan's line of communications. The line Hongkong-Manila used to lie athwart it. Now it is gone, Borneo is in danger and Sumatra, Java, and Celebes are also in great peril. It must be conceded that Japan has spread an "umbrella" or canopy of air power over this ellipse. And by taking Guam, Wake, Luzon, part of Mindanao, Sarawak, half of Malaya, Thailand, Indo-China, Hongkong, and all the vital points on the China coast, Japan has made it into an island sea—a Japanese lake. The picture of complete isolation of the area is further completed by the presence of the Bonin Islands and the Japanese-controlled Mariana, Caroline, and Marshall Islands.

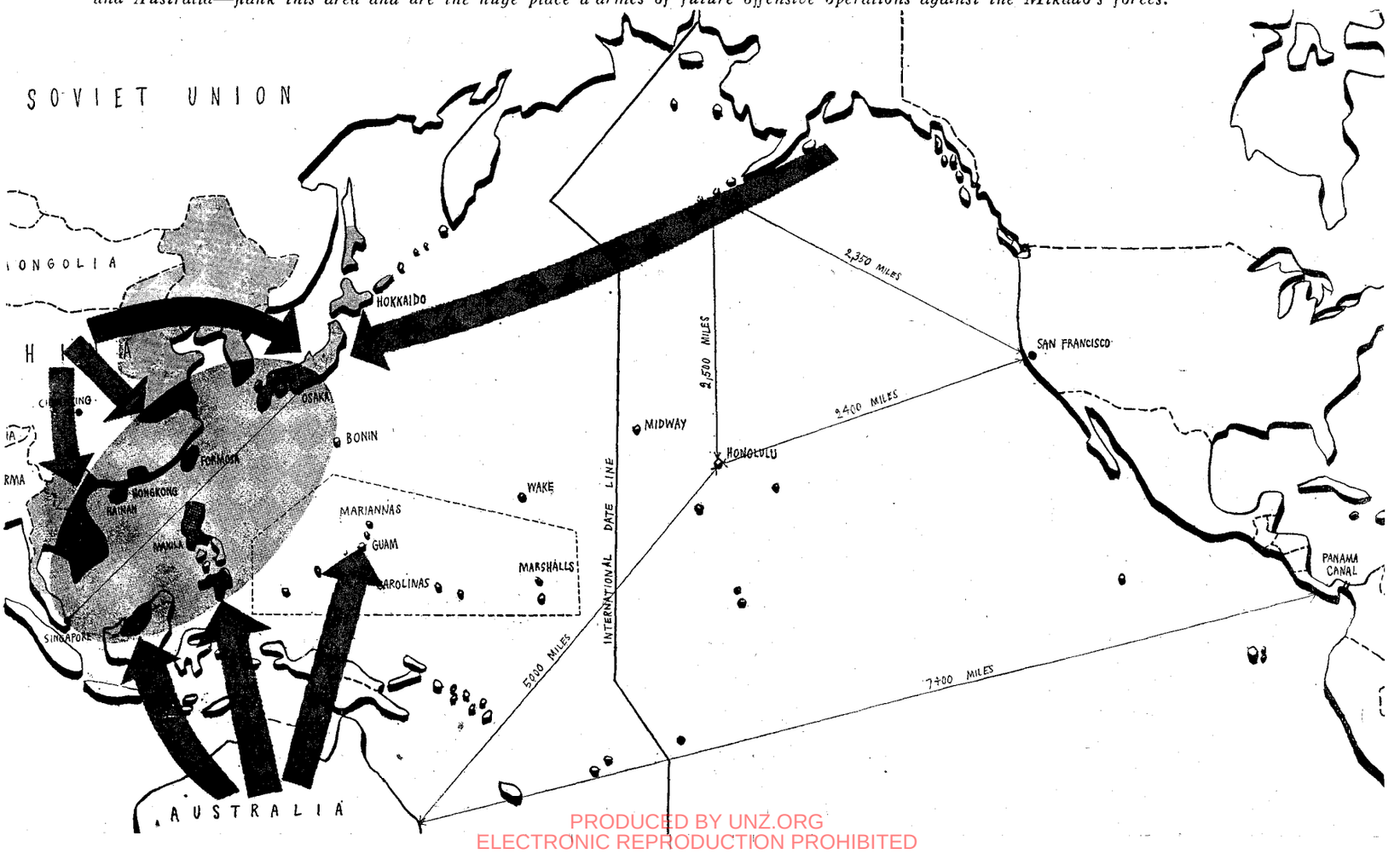
True, Singapore still stands, right on the periphery of the fateful ellipse. But Singapore is a defensive base. It is a "lock," not a battering ram. It can prevent, but it cannot force things. With the surrounding territories gone, Singapore is a padlock hanging on a door, the frame of which has been burned away.

Singapore is situated on an island which is separated from the mainland of Malaya by the Strait of Johore, thirty miles long and from one to two miles wide. There is one causeway which leads the Malayan States railroad across the Strait.

The Singapore Island is about twenty-five by fifteen miles and has roughly the shape of a diamond, with its long diagonal stretched east-west. The short, or north-south, diagonal runs through the naval base at the northern end and the city of Singapore at the southern end. In the triangle west of that line are the jungle and rubber plantations, separated from the Malayan jungle on the mainland by the narrowest part of the Strait of Johore. The triangle east of the north-west diagonal actually contains all the military installations—naval base, underground fuel depot, RAF base, radio station, water reservoirs, and the fortifications which cover the eastern entrance of the Strait of Johore and the Strait of Singapore which Singapore is supposed primarily to protect.

It is quite clear that Singapore is no *place d'armes* for an offensive army. There is hardly enough elbow room here and a couple of army corps would simply crowd the place to capacity. There is no room for a strong air force. There is a powerful and well equipped naval base. But that will do no good when a hostile air "canopy" is spread over Singa-

The liquid ellipse of Japan's present stamping ground. Japan's line of communications forms the ellipse's axis. Two continents—Asia and Australia—flank this area and are the huge place d'armes of future offensive operations against the Mikado's forces.



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pore. Singapore is good as a threat to shipping passing through the Straits. It is good as a focus of naval action *if* supported by air supremacy. But it is of no avail when the territories surrounding it are lost. Furthermore, it is difficult to defend against a powerful land and air force. If the Japanese decide to attack Singapore instead of neutralizing and by-passing it, they will undoubtedly attack its western half (where the rubber plantations are) and from there spread to the eastern or purely military part. It is probable that they will, before that, attempt to land on Sumatra and maybe even Java. They are seizing Borneo and trying to seize Celebes at this writing.

PRETTY GLOOMY, isn't it?

Well, no, not as bad as it looks. Glance at the map once more, and you will see why. This ellipse contains a lot of water with a lot of islands. But these islands contain very rich economic "food" which the small economic "stomach" of Japan will not be able to digest under conditions of complete blockade. If Japan grabs the East Indies, she will have to go further.

The ellipse is flanked by two huge continents—Asia and Australia. In these huge *place d'armes* lies the key to future victory over Japan. The ABCD powers at present lack the navies and air forces to break into the Japanese ellipse. More than that, the ABCD nations lack the bases necessary for that purpose. But the ABCD powers form a block of peoples—of China, India, Australia, the British empire, and the United States. They control the land of these countries, and the area of that land is many times greater than the Japanese ellipse.

The meaning of these huge continental expanses is two-fold. First, Japan needs them in order to secure what she may grab in the East Indies, in Malaya, and Indo-China. These added sinews of war will do her no good unless she can cover them by operations in Australia, Burma, and China. Second, these very continental expanses, which Japan must dominate to hold her loot, can be used by the ABCD forces to squeeze Japan out of its strategic ellipse—to force Japan to drop her loot.

Great wars are lost and won on continents. Air and sea power are complementary to land armies. They are indispensable, but at the same time auxiliary. You cannot do without them, but you cannot do with them alone. True, the huge *place d'armes* of China and that of Australia is not yet organized. It will take some time to do so. But this is the task.

INSTEAD OF VENTURING into the mare's nest of the Japanese ellipse, the United States Navy will probably be assigned the task of holding and controlling everything east of the International Dateline. This includes not only the Aleutians and Hawaii, but also the line of communications between the United States and Australia. The British Navy will take care of the Indian Ocean. China will continue to take care of a good part of the Japanese Army, as it has done for the last four and one-half years. Lastly, the Far Eastern Red Banner Armies of the Soviet Union will continue to pin down the cream of the Japanese Army and Air Force.

This great war in the Far East will necessitate an AEF. It will demand the utmost in production. The day will come when the great armies of China, at last equipped with modern weapons, will clear away the Japanese from the mainland. A great American Army will assemble in Australia. This army will spread its own "canopy" of planes over the southern half of the ellipse and will redeem, in cooperation with a reinforced US Navy, all the islands south of the Hongkong parallel. And from Chinese airdromes and bases the Chinese Armies reinforced with British and Indian units will strike at Formosa, Korea, and Japan itself. The encirclers will then be encircled.

If, therefore, the war is made as costly for Japan as possible in Malaya, Singapore, and the Dutch Islands, even though the strategic situation favors Japan, and if, as we must, the United States delivers the weapons of war to China and Australia, producing on the scale that Mr. Roosevelt has described—and all this while Hitler is getting his deserts in Europe—Japan can be squeezed out of her ellipse in the southwestern Pacific, and her defeat made certain.

COLONEL T.

Tokyo's Moves

WHILE Japanese troops were pushing through Malayan jungles and reaching the flatlands of Johore, where they narrow down to the island of Singapore, world attention was directed at the Dutch East Indies, against which the Japanese have opened a major assault.

The pattern of the Japanese campaign now becomes clearer. The capture of Hongkong and the encirclement of Manila severed those naval lines which might have jeopardized further Japanese attacks southward. The threat to Singapore makes the reinforcement of that base more urgent but also more difficult, because large supplies and naval vessels are not likely to be shipped there when the base itself is in such great peril. By occupying Sarawak in Borneo, Japan is now enabled to attack the rest of Borneo; from Mindanao in the southern Philippines it is a short hop to Celebes; and now the Japanese are clearly trying to reach the islands between Java and Australia in the hope of preventing the arrival of substantial American reinforcements, which Australian circles say is on the way.

The attack on Pearl Harbor, the rapid reduction of Luzon, and now the thrust eastward toward Australia were clearly intended to hold the United States off while pressure is placed against the positions of the British and the Dutch. It is a well-thought-out, and highly dangerous strategy which Japan is employing. Everything depends on how well the Dutch resist, how long Singapore can be held, how quickly American reinforcements arrive, and how soon Australia is converted from a base of supplies into a base for offensive warfare.

But even if there is no immediate prospect of large scale offensives, the defensive and delaying actions of the Allies are of the greatest importance. For they can make Japan's advances extremely costly. General MacArthur is engaged in one phase of this delaying strategy. Reports of Japanese merchant ships sinking off the Japanese coast show that Allied submarines are engaged in another phase of this strategy. The pressure of China's armies at Changsha and Canton is a third. And judging from the good news that Chinese units have been admitted to Burma, judging also from the Royal Air Force raids over Siam, there is still the possibility of a real Allied thrust into Siam, a thrust which might imperil Japan's whole Malayan position on the side of what Colonel T. describes as the "ellipse" of the Pacific war theater.

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MORALE FOR SIX-YEAR-OLDS

Common sense in guiding children through the war. Should they be evacuated? Should little Johnny listen to the news broadcasts? Alvah Bessie reports what the experts told him.

British air raid veterans enter a school shelter.

THE day war was declared I called up my two boys, who live in another city with their mother. The elder answered the phone, and I said, "How do you like the news on the radio?"

"I don't like it," he replied. (He's nine years old.) "Will you have to go to war again?" he said.

"Maybe," I said. "When you're attacked, you have to fight back, you know."

"I know *that*," he said. "You don't have to tell me. Hitler's a stink-louse. *No pasaran!*"

Then I remembered how, when we came back from Spain, I found him and his younger brother waiting on the stairs. They were six and three years old then, and they were wearing the loyalist caps I'd sent from Tarrazona. They lifted their arms in the Popular Front salute, and said, *"No pasaran!"*

I'd thought, embracing them, that thank God they hadn't had to see what the kids in Spain had seen. I remembered them too, at the railroad stations as we passed through on the way up to the Aragon front, raising their arms in the salute. Their arms were thin, their bellies were swollen, their legs were rickety.

Now, hanging up the phone I thought, Will we have that here? Will the kids have to face the bombing and the shelling; will they have to be separated from their mother, from me; will they have to leave their home in the war industry city, and be evacuated God knows where? Suddenly it all came back, the dislocation and the horror of starving children, children lost from their parents or orphaned, children with large eyes, bewildered and hardened into new and unseemly patterns.

WHAT IS BEING DONE for the children? I wondered. Now? Here? In New York? Throughout the country? We can expect raids, I thought. They aren't likely to be heavy or to last long, like they were in Spain, in London, but we can expect them. Who is working on this? What do they think? I determined to investigate this business, to speak to schoolteachers, child specialists, welfare organizations. I imagine all parents on our coastlines felt the same way. On this point alone I can assure you that the job is going forward. But it's an enormous job—one of the biggest we've ever tackled. On the credit side of the ledger I found that a score of organizations is already at work. To give you an idea: involved in New York alone are the energies of the Army, the Office of Civilian Defense, the Red Cross, the Women's Voluntary Services, the State Housing Division, the Board of Education, the Parent-Teachers' Associations, the Girl Scouts and the Boy Scouts, the Child Study Association of America, the Children's Bureau of the US Department of Labor, the National Committee for Mental Hygiene, the American Legion and its auxiliaries, the churches, the trade unions, the Police and Fire Departments, the Foster Parents' Plan for War Children, the Defense Housing Administration, the Surplus Marketing Administration, the United Parents Association, and innumerable smaller public and private welfare organizations and individuals.

On the negative side of the picture is the fact that there is not, as yet, any single coordinating body to consolidate the disparate efforts of these great forces. Authority is still divided among them, but order must come rapidly out of this chaos. Just as we were faced with a new situation in the military prosecution of a war for which we were not, in certain essentials, as yet fully prepared, so we were faced with an enormous, complex, and brand new situation in the problem of civilian defense. Children are civilians, and their security represents one major task confronting the tremendous energies of our people. It's a task that we will master in time. Patience, as well as energy, is called for—and the participation of every civilian in the country, parent as well as child, unmarried man and woman as well as mother and father.

The greatest single job we have on hand—whatever should happen in the next few months—is to achieve emotional security for our children. This is the factor that determines the

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future of every child, if he is to grow into an adult. Emotional security, I was assured by progressive teachers and child psychiatrists in New York, is just as important as physical security. These are the greatest and most indispensable needs of children, whether in times of war or peace. Without them, youngsters grow into warped and maladjusted adults, unequipped for the daily problems of life in a democracy.

WHAT IS THIS emotional security? How can it be achieved? What shall we say to our children? How can the nature of the war be explained to the youngest child? What should the child feel about the war and how much of his consciousness should be involved in it? Should children be evacuated from the great cities on our coastlines? These are the questions that bothered me, thinking of my kids, that everybody wants answered.

For the moment the broad aspects of this problem are susceptible of solution on certain elementary grounds. The innumerable details that will arise can only be solved by a flexible understanding of the problem, and a flexible organization to handle it. Evacuation? No one can answer that question yet—for the US Army alone will give orders for children to be evacuated, or to be kept at home. The Army alone will be in a position to know how great a risk children will run by remaining in our larger cities to face possible air raids. But it is certain that definite precautions can be taken that will look toward the possibilities of evacuation, and solve the physical and emotional problems involved, *if* evacuation should become necessary.

On this score the experience of Great Britain becomes valuable. I was told that the first British evacuations went off badly. The British people too were facing an unprecedented situation for which they were largely unprepared. And while it is unlikely for the time being that New York or San Francisco will have to face repeated mass attacks (as London did), it is well to know what mistakes were made in Britain when those attacks were delivered. Both the Foster Parents' Plan for War Children and the Children's Bureau of the US Department of Labor have made public reports bearing on the British experience with children under conditions of aerial attack.

To condense this information—to oversimplify it—it was discovered that evacuation can only be successful (from the standpoint of the child's adjustment and happiness) if it is carefully prepared, organized to a T, and under the supervision of individuals specially trained in the handling of young children. Without these prerequisites, I was told, it is better for families to be together. To this end, it is now known, the New York State Housing Administration is utilizing the efforts of 8,000 volunteer enumerators, who are canvassing upstate counties to locate foster homes for evacuated women, children, and aged and infirm individuals from the city. Classes are being formed (contact your local OCD office, Board of Education, etc.) to train women in the handling, feeding, and care of potential evacuees. Mothers, teachers, men, and women with training in first aid, nursing, and dietetics must demand their complete integration into organized bodies to handle such an emergency, should it arise. For group feeding and nutrition in New York State alone, it has been estimated, 20,000 trained men and women will be required.

SHORT of actual evacuation to safer communities (if it should be felt advisable by the military authorities) much can be done to assure the *physical* security of children in large cities. In air raids people do get killed, and children too, but the number of killed and injured can be *greatly* diminished by proper air raid precautions, rigidly observed and enforced. Scare psychology, employed by frightened and misinformed individuals (as well as by fifth columnists), must be stamped out. In his excellent little book *Bombs and Bombing,* Willy Ley states that ". . . with all the air raids it has undergone, Great Britain has a lower death rate at present than in peacetime." Barcelona, Madrid, London, Chungking, and Moscow have proved that air raids cannot break the morale of a determined people—they can only strengthen it. The chances of any single individual's being the victim of a direct hit can be roughly calculated (and the individual somewhat reassured) when it is considered that modern cities (to quote Mr. Ley again) "contain more than fifty percent street, park, and courtyard area." And ". . . the roofs of buildings form much less than half of the total area of a city. This figure varies . . . from fifteen to twenty-five percent, twenty percent on the average."

Knowledge of this sort can mitigate panic which, as Mayor LaGuardia has told us, can kill more people than bombs. And more children too. With such instruction as is currently available and distributed by governmental, state, and municipal agencies, we already possess a large body of information that will help us fight the menace from the air.

Too we possess the knowledge that the child takes his cue from the adult—in all things. This is what is meant by emotional security. Parents require education in behavior under wartime conditions, and the attitude of the parent is invariably the clue to the attitude of the child. Panic in the parent means fear in the child. He *must* be with someone he likes and respects, and that someone *must* behave correctly. That someone must do everything possible to prevent an attitude of tension in the home, the school, the playground, or the foster home. There must not be too much conversation about the war, about the danger of air raids, the effects of air raids. News broadcasts should be listened to by children capable of understanding them, but the desire to listen to broadcasts must not be permitted to become an obsession with the child. He must be *kept busy* at all times, busy with the normal routine of his child's life—if this routine is maintained in its normal day-to-day fashion, he will feel secure from danger.

For it is impossible to lie to children. In a fifteen-page bulletin to parents just issued by the Child Study Association of America, you'll find the following, and it's worth quoting:

"It is not our words that convince but rather the child's feeling that his parents have matters under control." Further: "Whatever morale means, it means something more than a 'front.' It means more than a grim silence or a pretense of courage. For families it means a frank but balanced recognition of a common danger and a feeling of confidence that, come what may, its members will stand by one another.

"We have long known how foolish it is to try to deceive children. If a surgical operation has to be faced, telling a child that 'it won't hurt a bit,' is not the best way to help him through it. On the contrary, we tell him, briefly to be sure, that it probably will hurt some, but that his mother will be right beside him."

This excellent little pamphlet can be obtained by writing to the Association (221 West 57th Street, New York City) and enclosing five cents in stamps for mailing charges. It contains some information, also, on the British experience, and says, "For children under seven the inability to grasp this large and threatening situation, to understand it or do anything about

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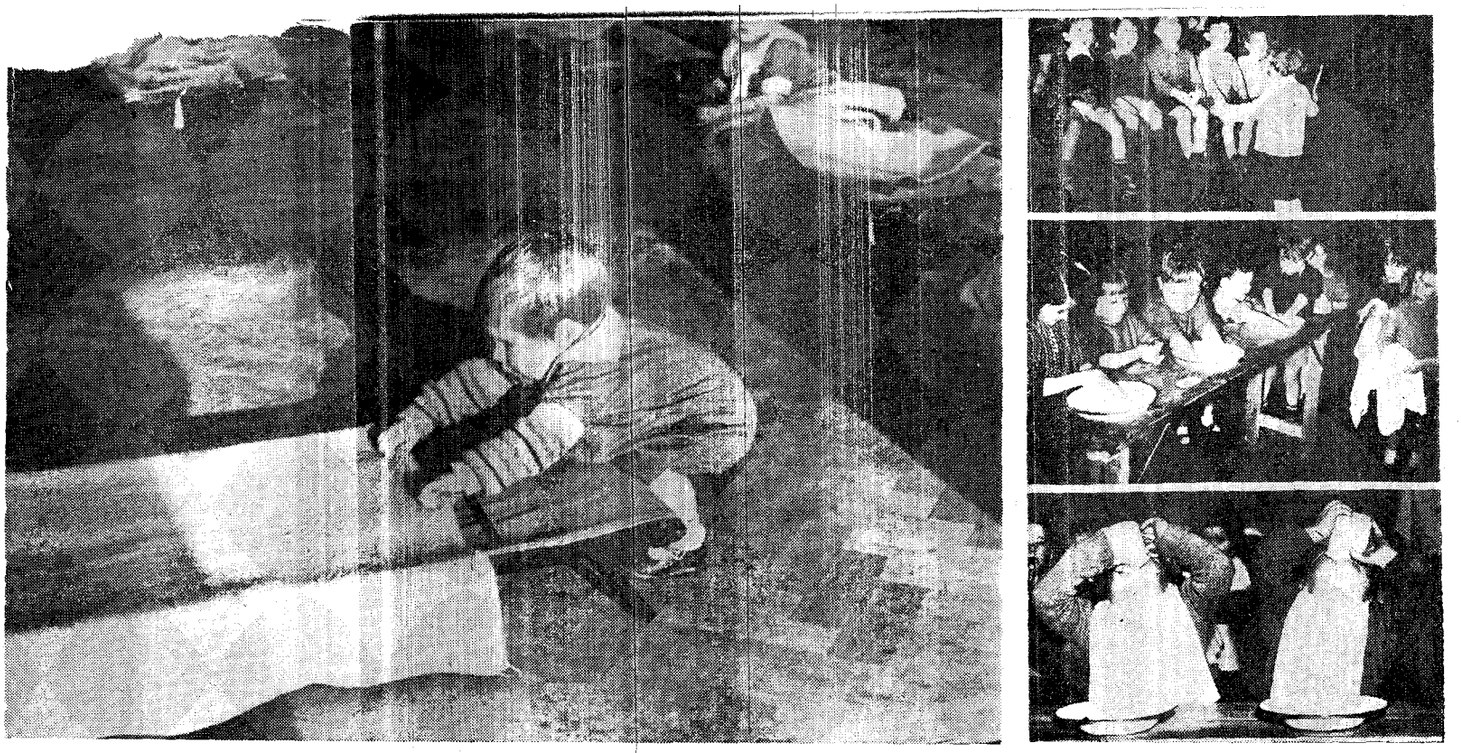

Their parents engaged in full time war work, these British youngsters spend the day at a nursery established by J. B. Priestley.

it, only increases the feeling of frustration and insecurity that go with being little."

It must therefore be understood that very small children cannot possibly understand the nature of the war or the horrors of aerial bombardment. Their parents must set the mood for them by their own behavior, and should an air attack be delivered, they must be handled with *common sense* (remember the phrase, it's very important), just as they would be handled in any natural catastrophe to which the human race has been subjected ever since it came to consciousness.

Older children (say from ten through adolescence, and sometimes younger) can understand simple facts and act upon them. "Remember," a New York child psychiatrist said to me, "that children want *simple* answers. They don't want elaborate explanations of anything; in fact, they won't listen to them." Answer their questions, he said, with assurance, and with simplicity, briefly.

"Small children can understand that there are bad men in airplanes who wish to hurt us," said a progressive-school teacher. "Older ones can understand that the people who rule Germany, Italy, and Japan want to rule the world; that they have made war upon us, and that we must fight them with all the means at our disposal if we want to continue to live the free and happy life we now enjoy."

A map, this teacher said, would help explain to children of the pre-adolescent age group something of the nature of the war. On that map children can be shown who are our Allies in this just war (and they *must* be made to feel that it *is* a just war)—the people of Britain, of China, of the Soviet Union. Much can be told the children about the peoples of these great countries; their questions should be freely answered. Pictures can be shown to children, so they may see what these countries look like, what their people, their armies, and their children look like.

Common sense is the rule here, with not too much emphasis upon the potential horrors, nor too little emphasis upon the seriousness of the situation with which our country is faced. Older children—girls and boys of the Scout age—both the psychiatrists and the teachers stressed, *must* feel that they are a part of the common effort; they should be encouraged to participate in those defense activities for which they are physically and otherwise qualified, if it involves no more than saving paper and tinfoil, knitting for little girls, junior air raid warden jobs for the older children. In this way, they will not feel that they are left out of their parents' and brothers' interests, for the parents and brothers, too, will be deeply involved in the national war effort, whether in the armed service of their country, or in the many and varied community efforts for civilian defense.

This feeling of participation, I was told, is important in peace, doubly important in wartime it goes without saying. It is important in air raid drills which, at the instigation of Boards of Education all over the country, are now a daily routine in our schools. Group activity is the key to correct social attitudes for children and adults—it is a precondition among children, if they are to be good members of a social group. Hence, it is possible, on this basis also, to prepare children for possible evacuation from their homes—a drastic measure, to be sure, but one which need not result badly for the child or for his parents, if properly carried out. Should it become necessary—some time before it *is* necessary, in fact—children should be prepared for it, calmly, sensibly. Your child must feel that he is not being forcibly ejected from his home, or that he is being abandoned, or is alone. He must be told that it is something thousands of other children are also doing, that his parents will visit him frequently, communicate with him even more frequently, and insofar as possible, evacuation must be presented in the guise of a vacation in the country. Parents, here too, must not display anxiety, for their anxiety will be communicated to the child, and fear for the safety of parents can ruin the child's happiness.

These factors cannot be repeated too often, nor overemphasized—they are basic to the adjustment of children at all times.

This is a task the magnitude of which is staggering, but it can be accomplished through the united will of the people, just as the war against Hitlerism can be fought to a successful conclusion *only* by a united people.

ALVAH BESSIE.

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A Mighty Army

VERY shortly—on Sunday, January 18—New York City will be the scene of a national rallying of the generals in the campaign to secure Earl Browder's release from Atlanta Penitentiary. These generals are the nationwide representatives of the Citizens Committee to Free Earl Browder, whose top officers are Tom Mooney, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, Louis Weinstock, and Robert W. Dunn. It is a mighty army, already numbering more than 2,000,000 American citizens. At the January 18 meeting representatives of the Citizens Committee will "formulate an immediate program of action to secure the immediate release of the incarcerated anti-fascist," in the words of the conference call. Signers of the call also point out that "in this world emergency, especially in *this* world emergency, Browder's continued imprisonment should not be permitted to mar our national record." And "We insist that American justice and fair play is essential to the life of America, now, today." The committee again urges that every fair-minded American "*wire* President Roosevelt asking in the name of justice and common decency for the immediate release of Earl Browder." And again NEW MASSES wholeheartedly seconds that plea.

Now

"OUR task is hard. Our task is unprecedented and the time is short. We must strain every existing armament producing facility to the utmost. We must convert every available plant and tool to war production. That goes all the way from the greatest plants to the smallest, from the huge automobile industry to the village machine shop."

Those words of President Roosevelt's opening message to Congress are a program for America—a victory program. But the head of the OPM and his business associates in the automobile industry seem determined to secede from America. Bruce Minton, our Washington editor, presents another report from the production front on page six, and it is even worse news than the reverses in the Pacific. Sixty thousand planes, 45,000 tanks, 20,000 anti-aircraft guns, 8,000,000 tons of shipping, and huge quantities of other war materiel must be produced this year, but the OPM and its friends still cling blindly to the faith that, in the words of C. E. Wilson, president of General Motors, "ordinary business ways will take care of the emergency too." But these are precisely the ways that have failed so dismally to take care of the emergency and have kept war production totally inadequate.

After precious days lost in fighting every attempt to implement the victory program outlined by the President, the OPM has set up a committee which will merely "assist" in converting the auto industry. The appointment of three representatives of the United Automobile Workers-CIO to this body to serve along with three representatives of the manufacturers, is a gesture toward recognizing labor's indispensable role, but whether it will be more than a gesture remains to be seen. The chairman of this committee, Cyrus Ching of the United States Rubber Co., is reported to belong to that group of businessmen who favor all-out production. But even if this is so and if the committee does adopt the necessary proposals, will they get past Bottleneck Knudsen, who still is the real power?

A contrast to Knudsenism is the development in the communications field. James Fly, chairman of the Defense Communications Board, has announced that labor will participate with management "in the over-all task of planning for the nation's communications system." This has come about in large part as a result of the efforts of the Labor Advisory Committee of the DFB, consisting of the representatives of three different and, as Fly pointed out, "heretofore differing labor organizations"—Robert Watt of the AFL, Joseph Selly, president of the CIO American Communications Association, and Paul Griffith, of the National Federation of Telephone Employes, an independent group.

Sooner or later President Roosevelt will have to intervene to end Knudsenism—and later may be too late. Sooner or later he will have to end the chaos of conflicting agencies which have no power of coordinated movement in any single direction. We need, and need at once, an over-all civilian board to plan our entire productive effort. And its directing head should not be Knudsen or anyone remotely resembling him.

Victory Budget

THE President's budget message is the blueprint for building the financial structure of victorious total war. It is bold in conception, global in spirit, but everything depends on the execution. Of total expenditures of $59,000,000,000 in the fiscal year beginning July 1, almost $53,000,000,000 are for war purposes. This is about one-half of the national income. Toward other expenditures the President adopts an approach which expresses the monolithic character of the titanic struggle which our people are waging. "In a true sense," the budget message states, "there are no longer non-defense expenditures. It is a part of our war effort to maintain civilian services which are essential to the basic needs of human life."

One may, however, question the manner in which the President has applied this principle in specific instances. The cuts he recommends do not go as far as the proposals of Senator Byrd's committee, and, unlike Byrd, he does not call for the complete obliteration of the CCC, the National Youth Administration, and the Farm Security Administration. Yet some of the President's proposals will hardly help "maintain civilian services which are essential to the basic needs of human life." For example, an already badly mangled farm tenant program is further reduced to a mere $4,192,000. And with several million still unemployed and large numbers of employed workers being temporarily thrown out of jobs because of conversion shutdowns, it is doubtful whether the tentative estimate of $465,000,000 for WPA—a cut of nearly fifty percent—will meet the need.

To finance this program the President asks "taxes and bonds, and bonds and taxes." He proposes an increase of $7,000,000,000 in new taxes, plus a $2,000,000,000 rise in social security levies. The budget message rightly places the primary emphasis on progressive taxation, that is, taxes on incomes, estates, gifts, and profits, and opposes any increase in social security rates unless "the worker is given his full money's worth in increased social security." But unfortunately the message also opens the door to the sales tax, and within a few hours the press pushed through that door a "movement" for a sales tax.

In an early issue NEW MASSES will publish an article presenting a constructive win-the-war tax program. For the present we wish to emphasize the necessity of not permitting congressional reactionaries to do what they did in 1940 and 1941: convert even the progressive method of taxation into a means of saddling the people with inequitable burdens. That will not help national morale. It is particularly important to stiffen greatly the corporate income tax and the excess profits tax, and to reenact a strong undivided profits levy. Our present excess profits tax yields less than $500,000,000 a year, whereas the excess profits taxes in 1918 amounted to $2,506,000,000. England has a fifty percent levy on "normal" corporate income and a 100 percent excess profits tax; this compares with our twenty-nine percent tax on the first $25,000 net profit and thirty percent on the rest, and

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an excess profits tax which is so weak that General Motors can earn $210,000,000 a year before it has to pay anything for excess earnings.

The President has posed the problem. We need to solve it with our sights raised not only to new production levels and new appropriations, but to the people, who are the true measure of this war.

Landis of OCD

WE WELCOME President Roosevelt's appointment of James M. Landis as Executive of the Office of Civilian Defense. Besides his experience as a regional director of OCD, Dean Landis has a record of honest, energetic public service to qualify him for his new, extremely important post. He will relieve Mayor LaGuardia, who continues as national director, insofar as administrative office details are concerned, and will be "responsible for the creation of organizations to effectuate policies outlined by the director in consultation with the executive." As LaGuardia pointed out in a statement following the Landis appointment, this partial reorganization of the OCD will afford him more time in the field and also help to meet the problems arising from the growth and activities of civilian defense. Certainly the President's plan is more feasible than putting the OCD under War Department administration, as a House majority had recommended. First of all, the military authorities have their hands full with the strictly military aspect of waging war. And then, civilian defense should be just that —civilian. Its initiative should come from the people themselves, from the local communities as well as nationally. It is logical that the national directorship of such an enterprise should also be civilian. NEW MASSES wishes Dean Landis and Mayor LaGuardia all success in their responsibilities, and pledges them its full cooperation.

The Profiteers Advance

THERE'S no warrant for the attempt by some retailers to jump through the ceiling on sugar prices. Nor is there any reason for the reported hoarding of sugar. Undoubtedly both circumstances are closely related to the fear that our sugar supplies from the Philippines and Hawaii will be lost to us. But a very small story in the back pages of newspapers should reassure people about sugar supply. The story is that the Department of Agriculture has only now increased the quota allotments on the planting of sugar cane and beets. These quotas have been maintained for several years to sustain the price of sugar and even now they have not been drastically raised. The potential supply of both the United States and Cuba is still immense, and a tariff on sugar also serves to sustain a price

Salute to Joe Louis

IN NEW YORK'S Madison Square Garden the other night, Joe Louis received an ovation that was evoked by more than the fact that he had successfully defended his title against Buddy Baer. Joe Louis, whose newspaper photograph is pasted on the walls of countless Negro shacks in the farthest reaches of rural areas, has become a volunteer member of the US Army. He contributed his entire share of the proceeds from the fight to the Naval Relief Society, which benefits the dependents of American sailors battling the Axis. "I am not fighting for nothing," he explained. "I am fighting for my country." The audience responded as much to his patriotism as to his boxing ability and his sportsmanship. And out of a similar patriotism, a similar appreciation of democracy, those who came to see Louis fight also applauded Wendell Willkie's statement, "There is no place for discrimination in our land."

Two nights later the Negro soldiers guarding New York City were given a benefit show, "Salute to Negro Troops," with outstanding Negro and white stars participating in a pageant and revue.

But there were other happenings during the past several days, happenings which prove there is still a group of people who would force "a place in our land" for racial discrimination. Negro soldiers stationed near Alexandria, La., were compelled to defend themselves, with bottles and bricks, against the guns, tear gas, and clubs of white policemen. As this is written, the press association dispatches from Alexandria are vague on details, but the facts they do give hardly justify the phrase "troop riot" which recurs in the stories. A white military policeman attempted to arrest a Negro soldier in the so-called Negro Quarter of the city. The reason for the arrest is not given. When the victim protested and his friends supported him, a battle began which spread to include 500 Negro soldiers and 300 policemen. Four of the Negroes were shot, a total of thirty-one injured, and a state policeman was beaten. But these are the sensational, and superficial, facts. We happen to know that Negroes, both soldiers and civilians, have been constantly subjected to intense provocation by certain residents of Alexandria. Nor is the situation helped by Army conditions there: where a few recreational facilities exist for the white soldiers, there are none at all for Negroes. Their social life is strictly confined to the Quarter, which is "out of bounds" for their white comrades.

And it's no good saying, "That's just the South." Even if true, that would be a very poor excuse, and it is far from true. Only a few days before the Alexandria occurrence a story with just as shocking implications came out of Philadelphia. There the commanding officer of the 77th Coast Artillery Regiment, Col. Riley E. McGarragh, warned Negro troops that any fraternizing with white residents would be regarded as "rape," punishable by death! This astounding decision was inspired by the colonel's observation that the white men and women of Philadelphia were hospitable to members of the regiment. Fortunately for democracy, the public protest aroused by McGarragh's order brought a countermand from the War Department.

But there is still another story. A few days ago representatives of Negro organizations from the South, East, and Midwest met in Harlem to confer on the problem of racial discrimination in the war program. There was no question of the Negro's patriotism or his stake in victory over the Axis. Nevertheless the delegates felt compelled to agree with a statement by Judge William H. Hastie, civilian aid to the Secretary of War, that "We believe the Negro today is not unreservedly, wholeheartedly, all-out in support of the present war effort." Why? Because his services have too often been refused. The Red Cross, for example, will not permit Negroes to donate their blood to the armed forces. Management in several war industries still refuses to employ Negroes. Segregation in both Navy and Army is still enforced.

Besides calling for an end to such abuses, the Harlem conference demanded full citizenship rights for Negroes; greater opportunity for defense training; complete participation in labor unions; a campaign to continue the National Youth Administration and similar social projects; and opportunity for the Negro to take a wholehearted part in all emergency programs of civilian and vocational training. Here is a program that American citizens, both Negro and white, must actively support. We believe it will receive that support. We believe that the McGarraghs, the Ku Klux-minded, are far outnumbered by those who applaud Joe Louis' patriotism—and who will reciprocate the patriotism of his people with a recognition of their rights as citizens.

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out of proportion to supply. In the last world war there was a real shortage of sugar until Cuba got going—hence the fabulous ascent of sugar prices to twenty-one cents a pound. Now the situation is such that the administration can, and must, resist price-hiking on a commodity of daily life.

Two heartening indications of such resistance to profiteering occurred recently. First Leon Henderson jumped the gun on the American Tobacco Co. by forestalling a completely unjustified price rise of one cent a pack on cigarettes. Then he issued a schedule of price ceilings on second hand tires and "retreading." Meanwhile the price control bill has finally, after seemingly endless deliberation and stalling, passed both House and Senate and is in the hands of conferees from both houses as we go to press. The potential snag to its speedy passage is a Senate amendment giving the Secretary of Agriculture veto power over farm price ceilings, which strikes us as a device for dividing and thereby weakening authority over price control rather than a measure to help the farmers. We hope the conferees will heed President Roosevelt's request to delete this provision. Despite its defects, the bill as a whole achieves a certain purpose that becomes more urgently important every day. There must be no further delays in enacting it.

Technique of Treason

A TRIAL is taking place in Washington that ought to be on the front page of every newspaper in the country. It is supposedly a trial for perjury, but in a larger sense it is laying bare the technique of treason, of the kind of fifth column work that destroyed France. The defendant is George Hill, secretary of Rep. Hamilton Fish. He is accused of having perjured himself before a grand jury when he denied knowing George Sylvester Viereck, ace Nazi agent, and denied ordering the removal of eight mailbags containing franked speeches of appeaser congressmen. But much more is involved here. Hill is only small fry; the big fish, including Hamilton, are still to be put on the griddle.

The government has offered impressive evidence to prove that Hill had direct communication with Viereck (who called him by his first name) and that he had ordered three postoffice employes to take eight mailbags from the office of Prescott Dennett, secretary-treasurer of the Islands for War Debts Committee, which was subsidized by Viereck. Hill had the mailbags placed in the private storeroom of Representative Fish in order to keep them out of the hands of a federal grand jury investigating Nazi propaganda. Other mailbags were taken to the Washington office of the America First Committee. It has also been brought out that within less than a year Hill sent out at government expense 500,000 pieces of appeasement propaganda and that he received $12,000 from unspecified sources.

One of the real principals in this trial, though no charges have as yet been brought against him, is Hamilton Fish. His connection with Hitler's agent, Viereck, should occasion no surprise. The man who first gained notoriety in 1930 as head of the Red-baiting Fish committee, who a few years ago addressed a Nazi meeting in New York, and who returned from Europe in 1939 urging that Danzig be given to Hitler, inevitably found his natural political milieu. Will Fish and certain of his colleagues be permitted to hide behind congressional immunity in order to avoid scrutiny of their relations with Viereck?

The Hill trial and the recent indictment of a prominent America First speaker, Laura Ingalls, as a German agent are a warning to America. It is in high places that the fifth column will be found; it is there that it must be smoked out. And let us not open any new doors to our country's enemies by accepting into the armed forces Charles Quisling Lindbergh.

Moscow Battlefront

ONE of the most striking items in the news from the Soviet front was a statement last week from the Moscow radio that the Russian counter-offensive has only just begun. For seven weeks this offensive has pushed the Nazis back; Moscow was torn from Hitler's grasp and the anchors of his position at Leningrad and the Crimea were pried loose. But now, the Russians tell us, we haven't seen anything yet. The full force of their reserves, their fabulous ski armies, new planes and mechanized forces, special night-fighting tactics—all this is only now beginning to bear down on the retreating German troops. This is news that will throw terror into the hearts of Hitler's soldiers, among whom the first mass surrenders are reported. It is news to amaze and encourage the rest of the world.

Big battles are still in progress. Pressure on the German lines in the Crimea seems to be synchronized with a renewed attack upon Kharkov by Marshal Timoshenko. Should the Germans lose the Crimea, they cannot hold the region east of the Dnieper, and thus, the USSR will regain control of the Black Sea and come within 200 miles of Rumania itself. The attack on Kharkov is in turn synchronized with heavy Russian pressure in the center; the line from Vyasma to Bryansk has been broken; the encirclement of Moszaisk threatens to trap a vast German army and push the rest of it clear back to Smolensk. In the north, meanwhile, the lifting of the Leningrad siege, combined with reports of intense pressure against the Finns, is throwing the control of the entire Baltic area into the balance. It is only one of the consequences of the struggle at Leningrad that Finland's rulers are facing a first rate political crisis which may force Finland out of the war.

In fact, there is a significant contrast in the news of the past month: while Hitler is losing grip, not only on his army but on his allies, the Soviet Union is strengthening its relations with its major European allies. Finland teeters at the edge of a vast crisis; in Rumania, according to reports, soldiers are returning from the front and refusing to give up their arms; the relations between Germany and France are deteriorating as the people of France take heart from the Russian and American example. On the other hand, the relations between the USSR and Britain have been greatly strengthened by Anthony Eden's visit to Moscow, and while Hitler is jabbering more frantically than ever about the danger of Communism, the British are now surer than ever of the possibility of collaborating with Soviet Russia in the reconstruction of Europe. Likewise with Poland, whose government has just concluded a mutual assistance treaty with Russia. The Polish leader Sikorski recently returned to London with high praise for the Soviet attitude in the matter of training and helping the Polish armies on Soviet soil. The vision of the Poles and the Russians, despite everything in the past, cooperating for the future, will inspire all of Europe. It has its repercussions as far as Turkey, where pro-Allied elements are growing stronger and the intrigues of the Hitlerites are meeting resistance.

The Russians themselves have warned against over-optimism. The fortunes of war are unpredictable. Things never move in a straight path, and much remains to be done before Hitler cracks. But the whole world waits and watches the new stage of the struggle in Europe which the Red Army offensive is bringing about.

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The Ambitious Mountebanks

WE SEE by the papers that former King Carol of Rumania is trying to get into the United States from Mexico City to head a "free Rumania movement." It seems that the king has heard "echoes" from the "soul of his people." Numerous "appeals and exhortations," he says, "have strengthened his determination, as a patriotic duty, to put himself at the head of an action which will assure the future" for "true Rumania. . . ."

If ever there was a bit of unmitigated gall, it is this announcement. For if ever a man was responsible for paving Hitler's path of conquest, responsible for riding the Rumanian people mercilessly, preventing their organization against fascism, and deliberately inspiring anti-Semitic barbarities, it is this miserable mountebank, this cabaret hound Carol, and his gold-plated gold-digger of a girl friend, Madame Lupescu.

We don't know how many Rumanians will rally to the king. It is encouraging to note that the former ambassador to the United States, Charles Davila, has repudiated Carol in the name of "Rumanian democrats." Americans are likely to hold their noses firmly between the forefinger and the thumb at the spectacle of Carol or his kind liberating anybody from Hitler, much less reconstructing Europe in the spirit of the Atlantic Charter!

It has been obvious for some time that the "Free Europe" movements might attract such racketeers. As the Hitler system starts to crack up, many reactionary cliques will try to take an option on the future by joining up in "Free Europe" movements located in London or Washington. Such was the case of Tibor Eckhardt, the notorious Hungarian reactionary, whom the *Nation* exposed a while ago. Such is true of Rauschning, the ex-Nazi, or Kotzias, the former police chief of Athens now in this country.

If the legitimate governments in exile are not to be compromised in American eyes, it is up to the State Department not to give men like Carol a visa to this country. It is up to the newspapers to deny them a public platform.

Civil Rights in Canada

ACROSS our editorial desk comes a mimeographed "Brief Respecting the Cause of Disunity in Canada," a document from a conference on democratic rights recently held in Vancouver, British Columbia, the far western province of Canada. The "Brief" is signed by a number of local organizations, among them the Inlandboatmen's Union of the Pacific, the Cannery and Agricultural Workers Union, and the International Woodworkers. It tells the unhappy story of what has happened to Canadian civil liberties,

and appeals to the Canadian government: "The war on two fronts makes it ever more necessary that every possible cause of disunity be removed," among the Canadian people.

It will be shocking to Americans to discover the following facts: in Camp H of Hull, Quebec, some eighty-five anti-fascists are still interned. The ancient British right of habeas corpus has been suspended, and while some 200 fascists—among them the millionaire contractor of Toronto, a certain Franseschnini—were recently freed from the internment camp, nothing has been done about the anti-fascist prisoners. In at least three cases men and women who had served sentences for alleged "subversive" activities were interned for the duration upon their release from jail. The "Brief" calls attention to the fact that the Communist Party of Canada and several other organizations are still banned, contrasting this, for example, with the situation in Britain. It is hair-raising to learn that the Canadian government recently sold the property of a banned Ukrainian left wing organization to the Ukrainian nationalists, avowed pro-Hitlerites, whose functioning has not been disturbed.

Another unhappy aspect of Canadian affairs is the arrest of many leading unionists, often while they were in process of negotiating legitimate trade union issues with the employers. One of these, C. S. Jackson of the United Electrical and Radio Workers, has just been released. But Ottawa labor policy still leaves much to be desired: up in northern Ontario the Kirkland Lake miners are still on strike. Government officials and federal police are doing everything in their power to break the union organization.

It is an obviously sincere and stirring document which the citizens of Vancouver have gotten up. Last June Mr. Churchill urged that the "follies and tragedies of the past" ought to be forgotten in the face of Hitler's attack on civilization. But the men of Ottawa, although they cheered Churchill to the rafters only a few weeks ago, still cling to the follies and tragedies of the past as far as a substantial section of the Canadian people are concerned. It doesn't make for good neighborliness with the United States. And it doesn't make for fighting the war effectively. How long will it take Ottawa to learn?

Books for the Soldiers

WE URGE our readers to do their share in the Victory Book Campaign launched on January 12 by the USO, the Red Cross, and the American Library Association. Purpose of the campaign is to supply Army camps with 10,000,000 books to meet the needs of our expanding forces. Here is a fine opportunity to be of service. Books of all types, whether fiction or non-fiction, have been asked for. Army library records show that the boys are interested in good books covering a wide range of subjects. Every volume sent will have a wide and appreciative audience. So look over your bookshelves and make a collection for the camps. The nation's bookstores have agreed to act as collection depots. Your local public library will also accept books for the Victory Campaign. And remember that a book which you yourself found dull is not likely to make bright reading for somebody else. You may find it hard to part with some of your books; but surely there are others, even favorites, which you will gladly share with the boys in the camps.

Ferdinand's Alter Ego

HISTORY often has a way of dotting the i's and crossing the t's. Take the case of Ferdinand Lundberg. No committee to defend Leon Trotsky was complete without him, no statement assaulting the Soviet Union, the Communist Party, and progressives who showed a lack of hostility to either could fail to have his name signed to it. In the Newspaper Guild it was Lundberg who organized disrupters and chronic malcontents against every attempt to create unity. When NEW MASSES described the work of Lundberg and his ilk as aid to fascism, there may have been readers who demurred. Now Lundberg himself documents our case with two articles in fulsome praise of—Westbrook Pegler. And they appear in that catchbasin of political turncoats, the Social-Democratic *New Leader*.

Pegler, the journalistic Ku Kluxer, whom Lundberg himself admits "is unquestionably regarded as the Number One enemy of organized labor," moves this Trotskyite to rapturous outburst. He is "the biggest thing there is in American journalism," and "in undertaking to lead the way in crushing organized labor . . . Pegler has shown real guts." (So, it would seem, has Hitler.) And "For tackling the job Pegler deserves credit as a crusading journalist." And more of the same, all done in a muscular Pegleresque prose which Lundberg affects for the occasion. Now and then he digresses long enough to mention the name of Stalin together with Hitler, Mussolini, the Mikado, and Franco, but generally Lundberg sticks to the job of deodorizing Pegler and anointing him with oleaginous praise.

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Readers Forum

More on Prefabs

To New Masses: Milton D. Ellis' excellent article on prefabricated housing (New Masses, December 2) is timely and informative. The mass production of the kind of factory-assembled dwelling he describes has been technically possible in the United States for many years.

As Mr. Ellis points out, ready-made housing delivered complete to the site is inevitable sooner or later because, on a large scale, it would cost less to manufacture and would be a superior product. Observant readers may have noticed that news reels and photos of our forces in Greenland and Iceland show that the army is already using a factory-made, barrel-like barracks of corrugated sheet metal. Although relatively crude, these demountable shelters measure up in essentials to the prefabs specified by Mr. Ellis. Moreover, I noticed in the papers the other day a statement by W. V. Reed, director of Standards Division, Defense Housing Coordination, that the government had contracted for 15,000 experimental prefabs costing from $2,500 to $3,000.

Prefabricated housing is on its way all right, but it will have to cross a number of difficult hurdles. Mr. Ellis mentions some of these obstacles, both technical and economic. There are several other aspects of the problem which seem to me worth considering.

Would prefabrication make housing more available to the great mass of our people? Eventually prefabs will doubtless be as inexpensive as enthusiasts claim. The immediate prospect is not so reassuring. The fact that the various corporations experimenting with prefabs for ten years have not been able to produce them cheaply enough to compete with presently built dwellings may be laid to lack of a mass market for the new product. But the government's 15,000 units is surely a large enough order involving, as it does, housing for some 60,000 persons. The cost of land and erection on the site would probably add $500 to the stated cost of the government prefabs. At $3,000 to $3,500 they would be more expensive to own or rent than comparable housing now being produced without benefit of prefabrication. Incidentally, the photo of "Prefabricated Houses" used to illustrate the article does not represent the prefabs Mr. Ellis describes, but rather a commonly rationalized form of standard house construction which we are likely to see for many years before the "machine-tailored" dwelling is available.

It cannot be argued that the defense housing shortage would be alleviated more quickly with prefabricated shelters. The prefab, like all mass production goods, requires a high degree of tooling-up of machinery and construction of plant which takes time. The existing building industry was able to produce nearly 1,000,000 dwelling units annually in the years before the 1929 crisis. It should do better today and would not require any more (and probably less) vital defense materials than prefabricated housing. I am not arguing against the prefab, mind you; I am simply trying to evaluate the housing prospect.

The demountability of the prefab is, along with its potential economy, one of the great advantages of factory-made dwellings. But housing, because of its present umbilical relation to land, utilities such as water, sewage, and local taxation for these services, presents a problem different from the automobile, for example. It is claimed that transportable housing would obviate the "ghost towns" inevitably left behind when the defense crisis is past. True, the prefab could easily be moved from its site, but the relatively static utilities, pavement, schools, and other public investments would have to remain in any case. Obviously this problem requires national control and social planning of a higher order than we now boast.

Prefabricated housing involves another problem. What would happen to the 1,000,000 or more building trades workers employed in field assembly today? One-third of the cost of present housing is labor on the site. Mr. Ellis cites one example where mere rationalization of field work, with no true prefabrication, resulted in a fifty percent reduction in labor time. With real factory production this would doubtless be cut even more. The proper adjustment of such widespread labor displacement (to say nothing of the disparity between the wage rates of the skilled building mechanic and the unskilled factory worker) would be beyond even the best-intentioned private housing industry.

A prefabricated housing industry would, of course, be desirable not only because it would produce cheaper and better dwellings but also because it would provide the base for the industrial form of labor organization in a field which is not at present organized along industrial lines. It seems to me, therefore, that prefabricated housing on anything but an experimental scale will be delayed for the time being. And even after the crisis, it will require a more widespread social outlook to guarantee that the great benefits potential to prefabrication will be made available to all the people.

Sidney Hill.

New York City.

Experience at Lockheed

To New Masses: I have just read Bert Talcott's article on West cost plane production in the January 6 issue. Good, plenty good. I worked in Lockheed last summer and was stunned by the lack of efficiency and organization. Groups of men stood around waiting for other groups to finish working on a plane so the first group could do the work. Either group could do both jobs. For instance, "framers" who drilled and riveted the frame in place had to finish their work before the "skinners" could drill holes and rivet the skin on the frame.

In one day I learned both jobs. I was a "jig boy" who bolted jigs to the ship until certain parts were built around it, then I tore them out to replace other jigs as the work progressed. While waiting, I—being able to handle both drill and hammer—helped the "framers" and "skinners" just to pass the time. The average worker only worked half the day. Of course, they were training those men, and it would have not slowed production down much if it had not been for the fact that each "framer" and "skinner" had his individual drill and hammer that had to be plugged in and out as he moved from job to job. They stood around waiting for sockets while there would be a drill or hammer plugged in not being used. Also the wires to the drills and the airhose to the hammers were always in one grand tangle. A coiled spring with an automatic catch which when released would wind up the wire or airhose would cut down on accidents and speed up the work. There are a thousand and one things I could rave about. More power to the union boys working along those lines.

B. D.

Philadelphia.

The Schneiderman Case

To New Masses: Even while we work at the paramount task of winning the war, we must be mindful of the important issues inherent in the citizenship case of William Schneiderman, which will be reviewed by the United States Supreme Court in February.

The national unity essential for victory will be strengthened by a decision of the Supreme Court upholding the right of William Schneiderman to retain his American citizenship. Such a ruling will contribute to the unity of the American people in two important ways:

(1) It will establish the fact that the 8,000,000 naturalized Americans are an integral part of our citizenry and that their citizenship, once legally acquired, can no more be taken from them than can the citizenship of native-born Americans.

(2) It will bolster the traditional liberties guaranteed in the Bill of Rights by refuting the undemocratic concept that foreign-born citizens are "second class" or probationary citizens who may not, lest they lose their citizenship, exercise the constitutional rights of free speech and freedom of political belief.

William Schneiderman came to the United States from Russia at the age of three. When he was eighteen years old and during the time he was a student at the Uniersity of California at Los Angeles, he applied for citizenship. After complying with all requirements and having answered truthfully all questions put to him, he was granted citizenship at the age of twenty-one.

In 1939 the Immigration and Naturalization Serice of the Department of Labor started proceedings to revoke Schneiderman's citizenship, and in June 1940 a federal court in San Francisco ordered cancellation. This decision was later upheld by the Federal Circuit Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit. On appeal to the United States Supreme Court, the high court, on Oct. 13, 1941, agreed to review the case. February has been set as the time when oral arguments will be heard. Wendell L. Willkie, who entered the case at the invitation of Carol King, Schneiderman's counsel, will appear for Schneiderman.

The sole basis of the suit to revoke Schneiderman's citizenship is the fact that he was at the time of naturalization (as he now is) a member of the Communist Party. There was no law then or now making membership in the Communist Party ground for exclusion from citizenship.

This committee, organized to defend the right of William Schneiderman to retain his citizenship, is endorsed by numerous organizations of the foreign-born, by AFL and CIO unions, and by hundreds of eminent Americans.

The committee is eager to make known the facts in this important case and is conducting a campaign to inform the public on the issues. Particularly pertinent is a statement made before the San Francisco Commonwealth Club on June 20, 1941, by Justice William C. Douglas of the United States Supreme Court, who said:

"There must not grow up in this country any second or fourth class of citizenship. There is only one class of citizenship in this country. There is no room for any inferior grade. Where one has been allowed, the result has been the downward spiral of disunity."

We urge the assistance of all friends of democracy in making known the facts in this case.

Mini Carson
National Administrative Secretary of the Committee for Citizenship Rights.

San Francisco.

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"THE CENTURY WAS YOUNG"

Louis Aragon, in his greatest novel, traces the Peer Gyntish life of a Gallic coupon clipper. Saga of a petty bourgeois "out of tune with his age." Reviewed by Christina Stead.

PIERRE MERCADIER, the disenchanted bourgeois of Louis Aragon's last novel, is that mediocre, sensual man dear to French fiction; here, an indifferent, feebly gifted, slightly moneyed lycee teacher, who begins, apathetically, with a pretty wife and ends, paralytically, with a streetwalker. Though he sees himself as "the outside passenger on the social omnibus," consumer and observer, he is not typical of the bourgeoisie, not even of the coupon clippers; for his class and nation, family, career, and heritage are a burden to him and he drops them all, to wander aimlessly, like Peer Gynt, in foreign lands, looking for something—happiness or "himself"? He follows Peer's itinerary, but unlike that gifted tramp, returns broke to his native land, after ten years' absence. The dollar-bearing slave-trade to the Carolinas, of the great Norwegian Gyntish Self, is replaced, in Mercadier, by a trifling scholarly interest in the Mississippi Scheme of John Law and a trifling speculation in Suez shares. The dreamy inept of the capitals still seek purse and conscience in the colonies, but only at second remove: they do not go out, like Mercadier's own ancestors, and shed blood and twist sinew themselves. Mercadier squanders a little money in shares and a little illusion in women and then takes the family cashbox and leaves for parts unknown. His family shift for themselves. His friends cannot believe that the name Pierre Mercadier covered such a yawning vacuity, such an enormity of emptiness, so they build up a legend about the truant: for them he becomes the closet philosopher of John Law and paper money, and the private genius of a small artistic and political circle; a few paltry lines of his become "The Egyptian Letter," he becomes "Mirador," hero of a modern psychological novel.

MERCADIER RETURNS when old, but not to men and not to his family. He is discovered by the loyal, grateful Georges Meyer, a Jewish teacher, casually befriended by him during the Dreyfus riots. Meyer gives him a home in his private coaching college and a job: but the great philosopher, spending his time entirely in contemplation of plumbing and diet difficulties, while the wars of 1912 roar around him, begins to lose Meyer's respect. However, this man of illusion is the victim of another great passion, now just beginning. He spends his afternoons in "The Swallows," a little brothel off the Place de la Republique. It is his cafe, home, and club, as it is for many other disgruntled drifters. The girls and Madame think much of him because they do not know his name; and because he is an utterly indifferent and therefore polite old chatterbox, Madame (Dora Tavernier) thinks of him as a sensitive, and soon desirable, man. In the end, unreconciled to his family and unsought by his friends, he has a stroke on the threshold of Dora Tavernier's suburban house (Solveig's hut, no less) and after some months, dies disgracefully in the brothel-keeper's arms. She has reached into her withered bosom and found there, for him, pure and chaste, the love of virgin, wife, and mother, all the life she never knew: and growing madder as Mercadier grows more repulsive in his last illness, she begins to imagine that she knew him as a trustful girl, a bride, and devoted wife. Mercadier, malevolently watching, but helpless, can only mutter the one word "P-politics" by which he expresses his simple wants, bad temper, and eventually, his last breath.

At the end she discovers his name and writes to his family, but the letter never gets there, the son being mobilized for the war of 1914. He lives and dies, as he has wished, Nobody, and all through self-seeking; the mountain of the novelist's prose, as the great Jura mountain of his early love affair being heaped over the body of No One. He is sucked down into the quagmire of death and has found out nothing. Where has he been all his life? Nowhere, if not "in the faith, in the hope and in the love" of this grotesque Solveig, who is likewise the Troll princess.

THE CENTURY WAS YOUNG, *by Louis Aragon. Duell, Sloan & Pearce. $2.75.*

The poet-novelist, once a symbolist and surrealist, has taken the theme of Ibsen, the poet-dramatist, once a folklorist, and elaborately disfigured and transfigured it. Aragon is more lavishly, Ibsen more casually, symbolic; with poets, on account of their method, a good deal of symbolic overlay is just half-conscious. Ibsen loaded his *Peer Gynt* with the folklore of Gudbrandsdal, and Aragon loads his prose-poetry with what is a folklore too, the traditional situations and allusions of French classic literature; so that, with an allusion here and a parallel there, the book is as baffling as a hall of mirrors. It is not the book of a man with a great theme and great passions; but the book of a man with great sorrows and disappointments, trickily told, with moments of beauty, but much borrowed and many subterfuges.

APART from the elusive but constant Ibsen theme, there are sudden glimpses of Guy de Maupassant, Rabelais, Zola, Louis Guilloux, and even, it might seem, some modern American writers. One can go too far in this kind of literary prying, for a poet-novelist is not like prose-novelists. He proceeds in a different manner, first in a symbolic, allusive manner; and then, by no means in the straight line of the story, but from star-burst to star-burst, so that the book is like a series of poems. (It does, in fact, consist of three separate short novels in each of which the chief character bears the same name, but is not the same character.) In this allusive method and in this sputtering of star-bursts, there are sure to come out all the memories and innumerable references of a great literary craftsman. Yet it is a conscious method. A craftsman so ambitious, persistent, and practiced as Louis Aragon must have full consciousness of all that he does, and it seems likely that Louis Aragon in this book, his masterpiece to date, has attempted to write the novel of novels, the eclipsing novel. In the book are many unnecessary scenes (for instance about babies and politicians), which Aragon does not do well and which must have been included merely for the sake of giving a roundshow of "the real world."

Very interesting are two characteristics of long modern novels, exhibited also in this one. All modern artists seem strangely to feel that they are near Judgment Day. They are making summaries of their times and some sink their craft under a load of detail, like the great Joyce and the little Romains: and many, many give us novels of Begat, where we are obliged to run the course from great-grandfather to great-grandson, with the idea

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of explaining why we are where we are today; as though it were necessary to start with Pliny's maps to sail to Japan today. As a result, the hero-with-the-notebook has also come to the fore, dignified brother of the star-reporter-gangbuster. Here he is again, little pale brother of Cripure (Louis Guilloux in *Le Sang Noir)* and cousin of Oliver Wiswell who scribbled while they bled. This gleaning of "everything" makes the characters poor: and the object of the novel is characterization. Moreover, one gets the feeling that the writer himself is on the run, poor anxious Master of the Day of Judgment, noting down everything for a contemptuous posterity. Aragon, though a bold soldier of the proletariat, has this infirmity as a writer: he is afraid to fail.

As to method, however, Aragon's constellation method is richer and more honest than the utterly fuddled trashbasket style of Jules Romains, whose idea is to have a cloaca of detail out of which (he hopes) the reader will pick out some accidental beauty and Posterity will say, "Ah, to him we are indebted for such-and-such." Louis Aragon, who is really a great and honest writer, has taken the poor personage of Mercadier (Pierre, father, and Pascal, son, being the same man cut in two) and tacked him along a calendar of headline events from 1889 to 1914; and then inside this wretched silhouette, he has painted a series of splendid Gyntish visions in which the Jura Mountains take the place of the Ronde Hills, the Quagmire stands for the Boyg, Boniface, struggling against the little rain-dwarves, for Peer against the trolls of the Mountain King; and so on. There are the wild pigs rushing out of the bushes, the Three Saeter girls for whom Peer is a match (Pascal precociously loving Mme. Pailleron, Suzanne, and Yvonne); and little Yvonne, weirdly gifted child, playing the idiot and shouting "Wah-Wah," is near relation to the Troll Daughter with the green child, for later on she marries Mercadier (Pascal) and has with him a near-illegitimate child. There is bride-rape (adultry) on the mountain, and the mountain chapel, and even the vaguely suspicious doctor with his sanitarium; there is the innocent girl-soul long sought, the same scenes abroad, licence and dubious society, and the return to the faithful woman at the last. Aragon has wildly satirized the Ibsen ending, passionately and contemptuously substituting repugnant Dora for Solveig; yet in so doing, at the height of the book's literary effort, he recalls the fine scenes of the first part where the lilylike Suzanne lies asleep all night by a treacherous bog, while parties with lights beat the underbrush looking for her.

THIS IS a very strange book. It appears differently at different times. You will read it twice and find some of it tedious, and yet it will haunt you. It is a desperate, unhappy book, for there is no solution for Pierre Mercadier, that mean soul. He is an everfalterer, not truly "the bourgeois," and therefore one cannot conceive of him as any dif-

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ferent even when the new age rises. His muttering of "P-politics" on his deathbed is the author's mere bitter quip: and the Dora-relation, although it has one hymn to beauty, is intended to denigrate both parties, as well as love and the family under "the present regime." The author, in fact, in this book has not found, though he sought, a solution. He despises all of his middle class characters, man and woman, except as children, and one gets the feeling that he himself is desperate in the possessing of class heirlooms which he cannot even give away. This is the misery of a true-blue Frenchman perhaps, whose country is under the yoke and who sees no solution there for his generation.

Patriotism is strangely woven into our secret selves. However, an author is rarely without a solution. And Aragon is a great writer. He will struggle through his death-dealing bog till he finds his solution. Before he finds that solution, of the sensitive middle class man, he has to grapple with the death of his ambitions, his Gyntish self and all the classic tradition that he conquered as a prize scholar, he has to face death of his class, even his latest hopes for the French proletariat which only a few years ago were so high, and even of his country as it was, this thing worst of all.

Almost every writer of Western Europe is in the same position. Some take a journalist's solution. They take to the headlines and the *faits-divers* of politics, just as Aragon did in *The Bells of Basle:* but Aragon is now far beyond any headline writing or political sketching. He is writing the struggle of man against the age: and that is why Mercadier, petty and atypical as he is, is somewhat sympathetic: he is the kind of the man out of tune with his age.

THERE ARE three separate stories in this book—the childhood of Pascal, the French Peer Gynt; the absence of Pierre, which is a kind of Sketch of Paris Boardinghouse Life, and the Dora Tavernier affair, in which we meet a new world, the life of the brothel, and the little working class family in the courtyard behind the brothel. The history of the Mere family is so incidental and yet so colorful that it sounds like a different book altogether. Mere is led to believe, on very poor grounds, that his wife, the mother of his children, a hard-working woman, visits the brothel to meet men. He then fires the brothel and finds himself in the hands of the police. This is a Zola incident and Mere is a Zola workingman, noble, sinewy, simple, and unemployed, defending his wife's honor with the matchbox. It is of course a useful device for finishing off the brothel and leaving Dora alone with the title deeds, but it is more the introduction to another book than the end of this one.

For those who love letters, this is a book to have and to hold, because its greater power and better workmanship mark the high watermark, to date, in Aragon's literary life. Special remark should be made of the excellent work done by the translator, Hannah Josephson. This is so fine a translation, sensitive, poetical, that the French-novel addict does not long to read it in French. It is far and away the best work of translation done out of French in years. With Mrs. Josephson translation is literary art.

CHRISTINA STEAD.

The French Revolution

TWELVE WHO RULED: The Committee of Public Safety during the Terror, *by R. R. Palmer. Princeton University Press. $3.75.*

THIS book by Professor Palmer will interest primarily the student of the French Revolution. Its essential merits are rich scholarship, good writing, and animated sketches of the principal figures set against the seething background of the Revolution in 1793 and 1794. Its main weaknesses are the shockingly unhistorical parallels between the revolutionary era and the present. Thus to the author the French Revolution, "because it embodied a social faith, was like the German revolution of the twentieth century, a menace to the constituted order of Europe." This view is a dark blot on the book under review, which otherwise displays a clear understanding of the problems and aims of Jacobinism. Let it be said at the outset that Jacobinism and Nazism are antithetical, representing two different worlds. The first was the progressive force in the historical movement from feudalism to modern capitalism. It fused patriotism with good citizenship, social morality, and human dignity. The second, Nazism, aims to cast the globe into darkness. Its program is based on racism and on the enslavement of peoples.

The twelve members of the Committee of Public Safety, even the hotheads among them, never advocated such policies. Steeped in eighteenth century rationalism, sensitive to the social and economic changes which were cracking up the fettering shell of feudalism, they sought to make society purposeful when they stepped into the spotlight of history. They were courageous and realistic men who assumed power during a critical period of the Revolution.

The country was menaced by a foreign invasion, aided and abetted by the fifth column at home. But the Girondists, who had been in a large part responsible for dragging the country into war, were more vehement against radicalism than decisive against the enemies of the nation. Opposed to the Girondins stood the Mountain, supported by the Jacobin party with its 500,000 members and by the Commune of Paris with its egalitarian teachings. This vanguard of the Revolution pushed the Convention to the Left. The Committee of Public Safety, instituted somewhat earlier, was energized by the choice of such men as Carnot, Couthon, Saint-Just, and Robespierre. The period of the Revolution popularly known as the Reign of Terror, and distorted by the gory pictures of historians like Carlyle and Taine, was ushered in.

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But the Reign of Terror was not synonymous with violence, as one may infer from the pages of Professor Palmer's book. The Terror was the organized power of revolutionary France, directed against enemies on two fronts. If the Committee of Public Safety was driven to vigorous measures against monarchists, bourgeois profiteers, retainers of feudalism, and interventionists, it was because the safety of France and the Revolution was at stake. Had reaction been triumphant in 1793, France would have been partitioned amidst a holocaust of all progressives. That there were excesses committed during the Terror, no student of the period will deny. But they can in a large measure be attributed to sectarian zealots and treacherous opportunists. Those who helped shape the policies of the Committee of Public Safety, like Robespierre, Saint-Just, and Couthon, were not bloodthirsty tigers. They were humanitarian and realistic idealists who aimed to establish, within the existing limitations, a republican, classless society of free men, "where," as Robespierre said, "the country secures the welfare of each individual, and each individual proudly enjoys the prosperity and glory of his country; where all minds are enlarged by the constant interchange of republican sentiments and by the need of earning the respect of a great people; where industry is an adornment to the liberty that ennobles it, and commerce the source of public wealth, not simply of monstrous riches for a few families."

THE COMMITTEE of Public Safety was, in the words of Marx, "a genuinely revolutionary government." In the face of a civil and foreign war, it fed the urban areas and tried a sort of planned economy. The obstacles were of course insurmountable, for, as Professor Palmer indicates, modern industry was still in gestation, transportation and communication extremely backward, and the science of statistics undeveloped. Yet the Committee, it is shown, pushed forward production, manufactured munitions, requisitioned man power, unmasked traitors, checked profiteering, filled museums with rare plants, conducted a systematic education to improve agriculture, associated itself with science, encouraged art, beautified the capital, planned the construction of healthy and artistic homes in the rural areas, and aimed to abolish illiteracy. Thus at the same time that revolutionary France was fighting for its existence it was laying the foundation of the new society. To save the Revolution which had the social republic for its goal, the Jacobin Committee of Public Safety waged implacable war against the enemies of France. It was a people's war against despotism, a war for the liberation of humanity in which France had risen to the leading post. For this purpose the Committee organized and equipped a people's army. In Professor Palmer's words this army was "a nursery of patriotism," a political institute, educating the soldiers in the principles of the Revolu-

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tion. It was an enthusiastic, loyal army which knew why it was fighting. From its ranks rose some of the greatest military talent in history, thus proving that military leadership was not the monopoly of aristocracy.

It is indeed worthy of notice that the dictatorial Committee of Public Safety followed the democratic process by seeking support for its policies in the democratically elected Convention. And it is equally noteworthy that Robespierre, to cite Professor Palmer, "was one of the half-dozen major prophets of democracy." For the renowned Jacobin leader was not the dictator of France, as some historians have drawn him, but only one of twelve who held power from the Convention. It was he who tried to save the Girondists from the guillotine, and it was again he who was opposed to the bloody vengeance wreaked by a fanatic and by a cynical and scheming politician on the citizens of Lyons where Girondism had become the center of counter-revolution. Robespierre was the statesman, one of the few foremost strategists of the Revolution. He formulated the government's policy of the freedom of religion, and tried to steer the Revolution between infantile leftists and indulgent grafters who had been intriguing to appease the enemies of France in an effort to halt the Revolution. Yet, despite his sympathy with Robespierre and his close colleagues, Professor Palmer seems to doubt the evidence against the Dantonists. But it should be added that the careful research of Albert Mathiez has given convincing proof of their guilt.

The question has often been asked: Why did the Jacobins under Robespierre, Saint-Just, and Couthon fail to hold power? It is hardly sufficient to say with the author that the victories of the revolutionary armies in 1794 shattered the *raison d'etre* of the revolutionary government, or to contend, as some have maintained, that the Jacobin leaders had alienated the support of the workers by the maximum on wages and could not bridge the gulf between themselves and the Parisian masses, after their leaders among the *Enrages* and the Hebertists had been liquidated. In the opinion of the reviewer, the basic reason for the fall of the Jacobin leaders lay in the fact that their ideal society, with its focus on the past, darkened their vision of the emerging bourgeois order. Marx observed this serious limitation in the Jacobin leaders after a two years' study of the history of the French Revolution. In 1845 he wrote:

"Robespierre, Saint-Just, and their partisans fell because they confused the realist, democratic state of antiquity, based on real slavery, with the spiritualist, representative, and democratic modern state, based on the emancipated slavery of bourgeois society."

Robespierre and Saint-Just were in a sense mystics. They saw virtue in poverty. They hated privilege, arising from wealth. But they could not see that wealth could cease to be a privilege by becoming the common property of a humanitarian democracy.

SAMUEL BERNSTEIN.

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New York sees a stirring pageant depicting the Negro's part in American life. The symbol and test of our democracy. Muffling the voice of confusion.

"SALUTE TO NEGRO TROOPS" was more than a stirring pageant and revue, more than a magnificent evening at the theater. It was an historic landmark in American life. For it symbolized the fusion of two profound impulses of the Negro people in this war crisis: the desire to defend America against the aggressive tyranny of fascism and the desire to win that full democracy of which the Negro has been deprived in his own country. Both desires were expressed with equal strength. The fight to achieve them was seen as a common fight. And the necessary unity of Negroes and whites in this fight was dramatized by all the participants, by Paul Robeson as well as by Eleanor Roosevelt, by Councilman A. Clayton Powell, Jr., as well as by Herbert Agar, Helen Hayes, and Burgess Meredith.

Presented at New York's Cosmopolitan Opera House by the Council on Negro Culture and the Stage, Screen, Radio, and Arts Division of Fight for Freedom, "Salute to Negro Troops" mobilized many of the finest artists of our day: Marian Anderson, W. C. Handy, Paul Draper, Paul Robeson, Count Basie, and many others. But the high point of the evening was the pageant by Carlton Moss and David Wolff. Against the background of American history, this pageant expressed the basic truth that the Negro has a deep stake in the outcome of the war against the Axis.

Three Negro boys are shown in the anteroom of a recruiting office. They are apathetic. Their uncertainty about the war is heightened by the Voice of Confusion which comes over the loud speaker. The Voice presents superficially persuasive arguments to the effect that these boys are going to be sent to fight a white man's war. They listen to the Voice and are tempted to run away when they are interrupted by Crispus Attucks, the Negro patriot who was shot at Boston Commons. In the ensuing drama Crispus Attucks calls forth great liberating figures of American history, both Negro and white, to discuss the war in terms of their own struggles for a better America. The figures of Frederick Douglass, Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth and John Brown, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Jackson, Abraham Lincoln, and other great Americans emphasize the meaning of our historic experiences.

The cards were not stacked. There was no disposition in the pageant to ignore the shortcomings of American democracy as it has been practiced. The arguments presented by the Voice force a deep answer to the question which the young Negroes at the recruiting office must face before they can participate with any enthusiasm or understanding in the war. And this deep answer rings true and clear. It is that the Negro is America and that the indispensable condition for his progress and for the progress of his country is the survival of those traditions and aspirations which fascism seeks to crush. The answer is not given easily nor is it portrayed with a glib sentimentality that attempts to ignore rather than confront issues. With the appearance of the band of Negro troops of the 372d Regiment of Infantry, the audience, like the three draftees, is swept into a patriotism which is all the more fervent because it has been made so meaningful.

Marian Anderson

The pageant is acted with forceful restraint and understanding by a cast which obviously has its heart in the underlying theme. Staged by Brett Warren and produced by John Velasco, the pageant had at once spontaniety and finish. The musical score by Leonard De Paur added to the moving effect of the performance.

Much could be said about the individual contributions of Mischa Auer, Oscar Levant, Sister Tharpe, Sophie Tucker, Ella Logan, the Berry Brothers, Babe Lawrence, and a host of other performers who kept the audience in a state of perpetual delight in this four-hour program. The appearance of W. C. Handy, Father of Blues, was greeted with an ovation. Marian Anderson, who flew down from Canada for the occasion, sang with that beauty and sincerity which touches the deepest emotions of her audience. Paul Robeson gave a distinguished performance which he followed with an eloquent statement on the war issues.

But it was not the quality of the individual performances so much as the total effect of the evening which inspired the 3,000 people in the hall. Everyone was conscious that the Negro troops in the audience and on the stage were the real heroes of an occasion which expressed the admiration and gratitude all thinking Americans must feel when they contemplate the contributions of the Negro people to American life.

"The glory of our people has just begun" is a line which ran through the pageant and it may be taken to express the spirit of the evening.

"Salute to Negro Troops" was a splendid expression of the ideals and loyalties which animate the country in this crisis. It pointed the way, I believe, to the kind of people's culture which it will be possible to create in this great conflict. Combining realism with imagination, history with a sense of purpose and direction, it communicated the deep truth that the Negro people will today, as throughout our history, be the symbol and the test of our democratic aspirations. And it communicated an even deeper truth, that the victory of America will be made possible by the courage and strength which 12,000,000 Negroes bring to the battle of humanity.

SAMUEL SILLEN.

Two Families

Norwegian-Americans and the "Pennsylvania Dutch."

IN HIS new play, *"The First Crocus,"* which closed almost immediately, Arnold Sundgaard was faced with the dilemma of having a large group of very real people on his stage, and no play in which to put them. The Jorislund family and their neighbors of Albion, Minn., are obviously well known to the author. Solid Norwegian-Americans, most of them possess great personal charm, and Mr. Sundgaard makes it amply evident that he knows how to create character. In this work, however, he has not known how to set these people in motion. Indispensable to any work for the dramatic stage is the clash of character against character, the conflict of people,

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either external or internal. But Mr. Sundgaard has mistaken the petty bickering of these people for dramatic action.

The first crocus of the title serves as a symbol for the author. Two of Mrs. Jorislund's children have found the first crocus in previous spring festivals. Now her youngest wins the contest, too. Actually, young Milford had cheated in order to win the prize, and much of the play revolves about the wider implications of his act: the exaggerated sense of responsibility he felt to win the prize; the yearning of simple people for deep personal fulfillment. There is an element of conflict between the Jorislund second generation and their mother; but it is not adequate to provide motive force for the drama. Instead, the playwright has had to rely on the family squabbles, which achieve no more than a warm understanding of this group of American citizens.

There were sound characterizations by Martha Hedman as the mother, by Perry Wilson, Edwin Philips, and Eugene Schiel as the Jorislund children, and by Hugo Haas, an exiled Czech actor, as an eccentric Norwegian with socialistic leanings. Johannes Larsen's sets succeeded where Halsted Welles, as director, was unable to give the script more animation than the playwright had achieved.

IN "PAPA IS ALL" Patterson Greene has written, and the Theater Guild is presenting, something that purports to be a comedy about the "Pennsylvania Dutch" people who live near Lancaster and round about Bucks County, Pa. "Papa is all" is lingo—meaning, apparently, Papa is dead. The play's comedy revolves around the hope of Papa's family—wife, son, and daughter—that he *will* die. It is as funny as a hearse.

But it's something more than that. Papa is portrayed as a Mennonite, a member of that religious sect which adheres to rigid ethical dogma of a Biblical variety, and does not "uphold" various practices common among the "worldly." Papa is the type-specimen patriarch, ruling his family with a whiphand. He is an anachronism in our American democracy. He is hard, tight-fisted, tyrannical, chauvinistic, bigoted.

There is no effort whatsoever in this play to understand these people, who are generally decent individuals, whatever you may think of their religious beliefs. There is only an effort to make fun of them, to raise a horse laugh at their expense—at the expense of their "plain" clothes, their translated-from-the-German speech, the principles they believe in. It is all slightly repulsive. Perhaps the Theater Guild directors thought they had a modern allegory about Hitlerism in the person of Papa and the rebellion of his freedom-loving offspring. If so, they were mistaken. For all they have is a heavy-handed jibe in extremely bad taste.

Involved in the small cast are Jessie Royce Landis, as Mama, who carries more conviction than the rest. Carl Benton Reid, who will be remembered for his fine performance as the younger of the uncles in *The Little Foxes*, can do very little with the impossible rubber stamp of Papa. Royal Beal makes a highly intelligent state trooper.

ALVAH BESSIE.

Dinner Knives

The humor of cruelty . . . . Victor Moore in "Louisiana Purchase."

IN ITS nasty little way, *The Man Who Came to Dinner* is a funny picture. It is also acted with delicate skill, neatly and swiftly directed, photographed well and unobtrusively. That, in spite of these virtues, it leaves a bad taste in your mouth, is the result of an appalling set of false values. The plot is inoffensive enough: a famous author, stranded in a Midwestern household by a broken hip, works havoc in his hosts' private lives and his secretary's love affair, belatedly puts things right in sudden repentance, at long last makes his exit . . . and provides a very pretty surprise ending. Handled in a spirit of violent farce, this story supplies such merry moments as the kidnapping of a glamour girl imprisoned in an Egyptian mummy case. In other words, it is all harmless fun. What sours it is the portrait of Sheridan Whiteside, the famous author.

Alleged to be a study of Alexander Woollcott, this portrait presents a supposedly great man—at any rate, a highly successful one. Kings and maharajas and gorgeous actresses hang on his telephone; the radio public hangs on his microphone. Ordinary people, finding him in their midst, go into a tremulous flutter of admiration. This admiration he proceeds to deserve by insulting everyone within reach with deliberate viciousness, and by using his prestige to exploit and cheat wherever possible for the sake of his own comfort.

The Man Who Came to Dinner admits that its protagonist is a rat; but it does not treat him as a rat. On the contrary, he is held up to us wistfully as a glamourous and exciting person, whose heart is really of gold only slightly alloyed, and whose mean snarls are no more than the amusing eccentricities of genius. For of course he is a genius; does not the admiration of a maharaja prove it? Similarly, the ingenuity of his insults is made to seem their sufficient excuse.

To remark to an unattractive trained nurse, "My great-aunt lived to 102; and when she'd been dead for three days, she looked better than you do now!" is clever, no doubt; and the matchless delivery of Monty Woolley makes it sound better than it is. It is not, however, a particularly new or original kind of humor. For centuries minds of just this sort have been pulling chairs from under Grandma and laughing like anything when she broke her leg. And it was much the same sort of cleverness which led Nero to burn Christians for torches, considering that this pastime was quite all right if only you got a good artistic effect.

In other words, *The Man Who Came to Dinner* represents the humor of cruelty. Verbal ingenuity, inspired acting, and the other skills lavished on this film merely gild the weed. Seduced by Monty Woolley, we may laugh when he twits a woman with her age, or first leads on and then sneeringly drops a poor, well meaning fool of an amateur writer. Nevertheless, to a civilized human being these things are not really funny; and *The Man Who Came to Dinner* is doubly offensive, first for assuming that they are, and second for assuming that audiences are degraded enough to think so too.

The actors who disguise this offense with their personal charm, however, deserve a good deal of praise. As Sheridan Whiteside, Mr. Woolley is the quintessence of polished nastiness; as his harassed secretary, Bette Davis is straightforward and competent, while Jimmy Durante gives a violent and alarming performance as a combination of Harpo Marx and Jimmy Durante. Ann Sheridan's bland perfection of feature hardly suits the sharp and acid part of the glittering actress-tramp; nevertheless she manages to do some real if raucous acting in this role. The direction translates the original play faithfully without seeming too unfaithful to camera technique.

"LOUISIANA PURCHASE" affords an instructive contrast to *The Man Who Came to Dinner;* as the latter is soured by the personality of Sheridan Whiteside, so the former is sweetened by that of Victor Moore. This film, one of the rare musicals to delight this reviewer thoroughly, is enchantingly carried out all through; its wit is gay and natural, its plotting extraordinarily cogent, and its bright and light and fantastic technicolor is admirably suited to the unreal world of the musical film. Its Gilbert and Sullivan introduction carols that Louisiana and New Orleans are imaginary places, and that any resemblance of its crooks to the late Kingfish and his pals is your mistake. Whereupon, with some realism, *Louisiana Purchase* proceeds to take Louisiana apart. The process is enlivened by Zorina, Irene Bordoni, Bob Hope, a delectable fashion

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show, and the Mardi Gras. But, above all, *Louisiana Purchase* is Victor Moore's picture.

As Oliver P. Loganberry, the senator investigating Louisiana graft, Mr. Moore is enormously funny; more than that, he is enormously wistful, pathetic, and lovable. His humor is based on the loving kindness of the human race, not on its malice. He toddles around, looking rather like Humpty Dumpty, and when he falls off his wall everybody in the film and in the audience competes for the privilege of putting him together again. When Senator Loganberry sniffles, "I'm sooo homesick for Washington!" he makes that stately and geometrical city take on the attributes of your little gray home in the west. He can get drunk with the engaging helplessness of a pet lamb; he can defy corruption like a chickadee looking a snake in the eye. In short, he is a darling, and *Louisiana Purchase* is a darling picture. As this reviewer is beginning to melt slightly at the edges, we had better stop here.

JOY DAVIDMAN.

New Blues

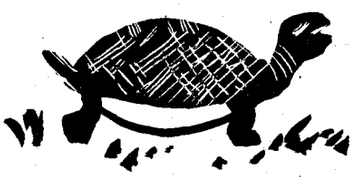
Elliott Grennard finds "King Joe" a memorable first.

RICHARD WRIGHT once said of the blues ". . . they grieve and accuse; they mock; they taunt; they express bafflement and disillusionment. . . ." He will now have to remark that they also exult in victory and tell of great deeds, for that is the substance of the text Richard Wright himself has supplied for "King Joe"; a "blues" song inspired by Joe Louis' nineteenth successful defense of his heavyweight title.

"King Joe" (Okeh No. 6475), sung by Paul Robeson and accompanied by Count Basie's band, is a memorable "first." It is the first time Paul Robeson has sung the blues for the public; it is the first time Wright has had one of his blues recorded; and it is the first time a popular dance band like Basie's has worked so closely with artists like Wright and Robeson.

The form of "King Joe" is traditional with its statement of fact, repeated, then summarized or concluded with a pithy observation. The music, too, is traditional and has served for a hundred blues. What makes it important is the fact that three great Negro artists have chosen this medium for recording their testimonial to another great man of their race.

To John Hammond, who officiates at the recording studios of Columbia Records, goes a great deal of the credit for the event; it



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THE FOLLOWING ISSUES:

1935—November 19; 1936—October 20, November 3; 1937—February 23, March 2, 9, October 12, November 2, 16; 1938—March 15, March 22, 29, April 12, September 20; 1939—May 2, 16, August 29; 1940—July 23, October 22.

SUBSTANTIAL COMMISSIONS FOR NM SUBS will be paid throughout the campaign for 5,000 new readers. For details communicate with Martha Strumpf, Circulation Mgr., New Masses, 461 Fourth Ave., NYC.

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GOINGS ON

JAMES S. ALLEN, author of "The Negro Question in the United States," "Reconstruction," who has visited and written on the Philippines speaks on "The Philippines and the War in the Far East." Sat., Jan 17, 2:30 P.M. Workers School, 50 East 13th Street. Admission 25 cents.

MARXIST ANALYSIS OF THE WEEK'S NEWS by BEN DAVIS, JR., member editorial board Daily Worker. Sun., Jan. 18th, 8:30 P.M., Workers School, 35 E. 12th Street. Admission 25 cents.

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was he who brought Robeson, Wright, and Basie together. The advance sales of the record have reached 40,000. It's swell music to dance to, and will probably be played on every juke-box in the country. Hammond is particularly happy about that because, as he says with a twinkle, "Robeson has often said he wished *he* could 'make' the juke-boxes."

ELLIOTT GRENNARD.

PROGRESSIVE'S ALMANAC

"PROGRESSIVE'S Almanac" is a calendar of meetings, dances, luncheons, and cultural activities within the progressive movement. This list is published in connection with NEW MASSES' Clearing Bureau, created for the purpose of avoiding conflicting dates for various affairs. Fraternal organizations, trade unions, political bodies, etc., throughout the country are urged to notify NEW MASSES' Clearing Bureau of events which they have scheduled. Service of the Clearing Bureau is free.

JANUARY

15—School for Democracy, Registration all week, 13 Astor Pl.

17-31—Saturday Forum Luncheon Group. Lectures every Saturday by well known novelists and critics. Rogers Corner Restaurant, 8th Ave. and 50th St., 12:30 P.M.

17—Workers School—James S. Allen, "Philippines and the War in the Far East"—2:30 P.M.

17—School for Democracy—Housewarming—new headquarters, Party and Dance, Suspended Swing, 13 Astor Pl.

17-31—Almanac Singers, Sunday afternoons, 130 W. 10th, 2 P.M.

17—L'Unita Del Popolo—Mussolini Funeral Hop, 3rd Annual Dance, Irving Plaza.

19—Workers School, Winter Term Registration all month, 35 E. 12th.

18-25—Helen Tamiris, Sunday Eve. Recitals, Studio, 434 Lafayette St., N. Y. C.

17—Popular Theater — Square Dance and Party, Greco Fencing Academy, 940-8 Broadway.

23—West Side I.W.O. Forum. Mike Gold on "Writers in a War Period," 220 W. 80th St., 9 P.M.

24—NEW MASSES, "Listen to the People," an all-nations chorus festival and dance, Hotel Diplomat, 8 P.M.

31—I.W.O. Trade branches, Star Concert, Town Hall.

31—Fur Workers—Annual Mid-winter Ball—Royal Palms Hotel, Los Angeles.

FEBRUARY

6-8 (inclusive)—NEW MASSES' Mid-Winter Week-End—Plum Point.

21—Oklahoma Book Sale, Benefit, Oklahoma Book Trials. Place to be announced.

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FOURTH RECORD-BREAKING WEEK

"Best Foreign Film of the Year."—*William Boehnel, World-Telegram*

Artkino Presents—Zoya Fyodorova in

"The Girl from Leningrad"

See the heroism of Soviet war nurses at the front!

Also Greatest Shorts from U.S.S.R.

"SOVIET WOMEN AT WAR"—"TO THE JEWS OF THE WORLD"

and Newsreel No. 14 (1941)

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The Riotous Laugh Hit

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Wouldn't Aunt Lil like that sub? And Cousin Harry? The Smiths around the corner. You're always having political discussions with them. Wouldn't they like to get the source of your information?

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- ☐ Ma-in-law.....
- ☐ Nephew.....
- ☐ Pa.....
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- ☐ Grandma.....
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